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ABSTRACT

This book is to be used in a Life Skills Coach Training course. Life skills are defined as problem-solving behaviors appropriately and responsibly used in the management of personal affairs. They apply to the following areas of responsibility: self, family, leisure, community, and job. A course aimed at training people in the life skills implies that such skills are identifiable and describable, that some people already have these skills and can demonstrate them, that others can imitate and apply them. Much of the activity in a life skills course takes place in a learning group composed of about ten students and their learning guide, called a coach. During the course students participate in about 60 lessons which provide pre-planned experiences to which students apply problem-solving techniques. Three process dimensions are involved: student response to content, student use of group, and problem-solving. The lesson model has five phases which suggest the approach used by the coach in presenting the lesson: stimulus, evocation, objective/inquiry/ skills preparation, application, and evaluation. (Bibliographies are included.) (MS)

life skills series

the dynamics of life skills coaching

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John H. Zenger
Training & Devel. Jrn.

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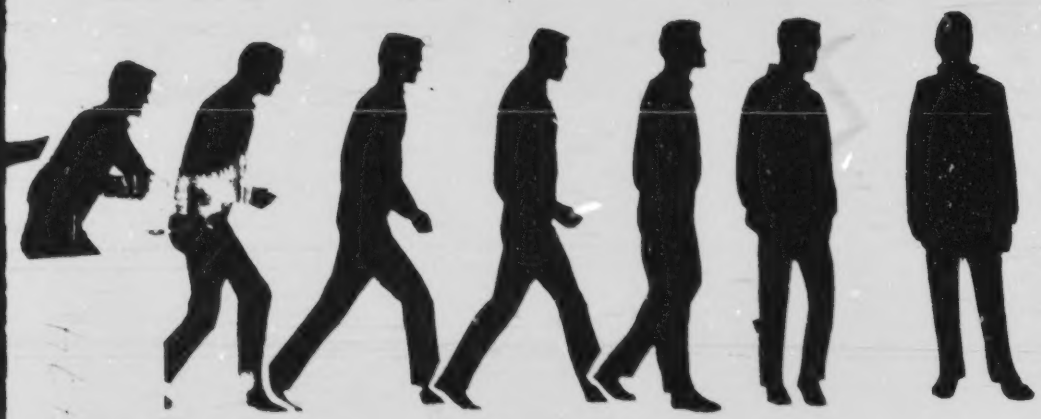

Training Research And Development Station
Department Of Manpower And Immigration

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THE DYNAMICS OF LIFE SKILLS COACHING

TRAINING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT STATION

DEPARTMENT OF MANPOWER AND IMMIGRATION

PRINCE ALBERT, SASKATCHEWAN

LIFE SKILLS SERIES

Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving (5th edition)

Life Skills Coaching Manual

The Problems and Needed Life Skills of Adolescents (2nd edition)

Life Skills Course for Corrections (2nd edition)

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FOREWORD

This handbook was prepared and authored by Paul R. Curtiss and Phillip W. Warren for Life Skills coaches in training, as a guide for their development as people and as coaches. However, as with any work of this type, many others were involved in the development of the materials. The Life Skills coach training course originated under the direction of Ronald Friedman, who provided much of the initial content and structure. Trial and redevelopment were contined by Ronald Friedman, with the assistance of James T. Vickaryous and Paul R. Curtiss. Others contributed at various times to the course development: D.S. Conger, Director of the Training Research and Development Station served as one of our chief critics and also contributed materials and ideas to this handbook. In 1971, Naida Waite, with the assistance of Ronald Friedman, developed the first edition of the handbook, then called Life Skills Coach Training Manual. Sections of the present edition contain versions of this work. Ralph Himsl and Mary Jean Martin also contributed in numerous ways to the development of the coach training course. Elizabeth Baran edited and checked many of the readings.

From the works of A.E. Ivey, R.R. Carkhuff, C.B. Truax, J.L. Wallen, J.D. Krumboltz, C.E. Thorsen, R.B. Stuart, R.E. Albeti, M.L. Emmons and their colleagues, we have taken various ideas of skill training, micro-counselling, and behaviour modification. We have borrowed ideas also on group functioning, counselling, and the development of human potential, using the group method, from W. Glasser, C.R. Rogers, F. Perls, G. Egan, the National Training Laboratories, J.W. Pfeiffer, J.E. Jones, W.C. Schutz and B. Gunther.

We wish to thank the Editor of the Training and Development Journal for permission to reprint the article beginning on page 75, "A Comparison of Human Development with Psychological Development in Training Groups".

The Training Research and Development Station is engaged in the experimental development of new methods of adult training and counselling.

Vernon Mullen, Chief
Adult Development Division
Training Research and Development Station

March, 1973

UNIT I

INTRODUCTION TO THE DYNAMICS OF LIFE SKILLS COACHING

A. OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE

Life Skills Defined. Life Skills, precisely defined, are problem-solving behaviours appropriately and responsibly used in the management of personal affairs. As problem-solving behaviours, life skills liberate in a way, since they include a relatively small class of behaviours usable in many life situations. Appropriate use requires an individual to adapt the behaviours to time and place. Responsible use requires maturity, or accountability. And as behaviours used in the management of personal affairs, the life skills apply to five areas of life responsibility identified as self, family, leisure, community and job.

The Relevance of Life Skills. A description of the disadvantaged population establishes the relevance of life skills. Study of the literature, and direct observation, reveal that many disadvantaged have a complex interlocking set of inadequate behaviours. Some lack the skills needed to identify problems, to recognize and organize relevant information, to describe reasonable courses of action, and to foresee the consequences; they often fail to act on a rationally identified course of action, submitting rather to actions based on emotions or authority. Often they do not benefit from their experience since they do not evaluate the results of their actions once taken, and display fatalistic rationalizations of the consequences. They lack the self-confidence to develop their abilities, and have low, or often surprisingly unrealistic aspiration levels.

Many disadvantaged have low levels of participation in the society surrounding them; few belong to voluntary organizations; the affairs of the larger society do not attract their participation. They lack effective ways of seeking help from each other and from agencies already in existence, although some form of public assistance provides much of their income. Long periods of unemployment, or frequent job changes mark their work history. They have ineffective interpersonal relationships and lack basic communication skills; they do not use feedback effectively, often thinking of it as hurtful personal criticism. As a result of characteristic marital instability, women often raise the children by themselves. Abuse of alcohol and other drugs affect the lives of others. Many find their lives beset by combinations of more than one such handicap.

Assumptions About Life Skills. A course aimed at training people in the life skills implies certain assumptions. In order to have a Life Skills course, the life skills must exist as identifiable and describable behaviours. In addition, it requires that some people already have these skills and that they can demonstrate them; it requires that others can imitate them, and through practice, apply them in their own life situations, changing their behaviours from what they once were, and so to learn. The situations, which compose the training, necessarily consist of samples of life; this limitation rests on the assumption that students transfer their skills from the life situation simulated in the training to the problem situations encountered in their own lives.

Assumptions About Methodology. To achieve the objective, the Life Skills student starts at his present level or style of behaviour and increases his array of effective behaviours until he can handle the complications of living a productive and satisfying life. He practises specific, identifiable skills of problem-solving in life situations. The ability of the student to apply these specific, goal-directed behaviours enables him to re-fashion a picture of himself as a person with demonstrated abilities, and as a person with a new value to himself and those around him. Obviously then, the Life Skills course uses two truisms as the source of its methodology: first, learning starts at the learner's current level of functioning and his understanding of present reality and, second, the attainment of long range goals requires the mastery of many specific intervening goals, whose integration by the individual leads to an apparent and significant behavioural change.

The Concept of Skill in Life Skills. The Life Skills course recognizes that true learning, behavioural change, occurs when the learner has a clear understanding of his goals, a clear description of the new behaviour and an understanding of those conditions which make the behaviour acceptable. The concept of these sought-for behaviours as skills makes a happy fit with the recognition of learning as changed behaviour.

A skill has these characteristics: a skill has the connotations of clarity in description; it has a definite purpose; it has certain standards by which people judge its acceptability. One need only think of such a simple expression of skill as the making of an omelette to describe the qualities of the concept of skill development as a means of accomplishing changed behaviour.

The Life Skills Course Defined. A great part of the activities in the Life Skills course takes place in a learning group composed of about ten students and their learning guide, called a coach. The coach has received special training in techniques appropriate to the course. He has skills which he uses to develop the learning situation described in the lesson, the fundamental Life Skills unit. During the course, the students participate in about sixty of these lessons, the exact number depending in part upon the requirements of the students. The coach has four main sources which he encourages his students to exploit in their search for meaningful behavioural change: he has the resources, the skills and experiences which the students themselves bring to the learning group; he has his own experiences and training; he has the resources of the community on which he can call; and he has the written materials which set out the content, the intermediate goals for behavioural change, and the final course goal of developing effective, problem-solving individuals. In sum, a Life Skills course consists of the coach and his training, the student and his experiences in his community, the written materials containing the content and course objectives, and the resources in the community.

The Content of the Life Skills Course. Five categories of life generated the content for the Life Skills course: Self, Family, Leisure, Community and Job. An examination of many students' life experiences using these categories produced a number of typical problem situations which lent themselves to development as learning experiences for the students. In the area of Self, for example, study showed that the students often had distorted views of themselves. They exaggerated their lack of skills or they had little understanding of their abilities relative to other people; they showed apprehension in non-threatening situations; they allowed other people to dominate them. The Life Skills lessons dealing with Self address these problems and others of a like nature.

In the area of Family, the students showed similar lack of primary skills; for example, they did not discipline their children consistently, sometimes resorting to severe corporal punishment at one extreme, and bribery for good behaviour at the other; they knew little of the need for planning for the care of their survivors in the event of death; many lacked the skills to give their children helpful information about sex; often, they failed to come to mutually satisfactory solutions to quarrels in marriage.

Leisure identified another set of problems. Typically, the Life Skills students had a limited array of leisure time activities. For many,

alcohol dominated in one way or another much of their leisure time activity. The Life Skills course responds to this limited use of leisure time by providing the students with experiences in which they exploit the wider range of activities which their community provides; it includes the planning skills often lacking in this context.

In the area of Community, students showed limited participation in the life of the larger society. Few had memberships in any voluntary agencies; all had dropped out of school; many had police records; some spent time in penal institutions. Many had drawn heavily on the services of public agencies such as public health, welfare, and the Canada Manpower Centre. Problems typical of these situations provide the basis for structuring Life Skills lessons in the Community area.

Consideration of the area related to the Job showed that the students often had little knowledge of ways people use to find employment. They had only vague notions of what employers want in the way of maintaining effective working relations on the staff. Many did not accept criticism well, and found that when called upon to give it to others, as a part of a supervisory responsibility, they could not do it. Typically, many of the Life Skills students did not know how to present themselves in the most favourable light; they failed to give a full account of their work experience, or if they did give it, they presented it badly. Others experienced frustrations because they had set unrealistic employment goals for themselves. The lessons of the Life Skills course dealing with the area of Job examine problem situations of this sort.

The course provides a pre-planned set of experiences in which the students apply problem-solving techniques to the problems suggested by these five areas; however, the students also bring to the Life Skills groups an array of personal problems unique to them. When these problems lend themselves to handling in the Life Skills group, they become a part of the course proper.

The Life Skills Process

The Life Skills course integrates the content described above and three process dimensions: a student response to content dimension, a student use of group dimension, and a problem-solving dimension.

The Student Response to Content Dimension. In responding along this dimension, the student may react first in any one of its three domains, the cognitive, the affective, or the psychomotor.

When he reacts in the cognitive or knowing domain, he might for example, rephrase a sentence in his own words. Or he might summarize the happenings of a lesson; if so, he might combine the rather simple act of recalling, with the more complex act of synthesizing. Or he might relate the discussion in a lesson to an experience in his home life, thereby showing relationships. Any manipulation of course content such as repetition or recall, explanation, analysis, application, synthesis or evaluation represents a cognitive or knowing response.

The student also responds on this dimension with affect, or feeling. This affective response may occur before, at the same time, or after the cognitive or knowing response; indeed, it may be characteristic of the disadvantaged to hold knowledge in low esteem, in which case the initial reaction might occur in the affective domain. Whatever the exact sequence, the Life Skills course recognizes the affective reaction and encourages its expression and control. The coach encourages the student, and gives him direct assistance and example in the expression of feeling. At the worst, unexpressed or suppressed feelings inhibit the development of behavioural change and prevent the student from facing himself and others. At the best, expressed feelings open the student to new understandings of those around him, helping him recognize that others have the same fears and uncertainties he has, and yet manage to function in spite of them.

When the student responds in the third category of behaviours, the psychomotor or acting category,he uses his body; he may stand up, move about as required in trust exercises, go onto the street to conduct interviews, go with his group on excursions, demonstrate new behaviours to others, draw a self-portrait, or participate in role-playing situations. The student's psychomotor responses often provide the most obvious evidence of his full participation in the activities of the lesson. His cognitive, or knowing manipulation of the content provides him with a necessary factual base; his affective, or feeling response to content expresses his will to face the consequences of the new knowledge and its effect on him; his psychomotor response represents his commitment to action.

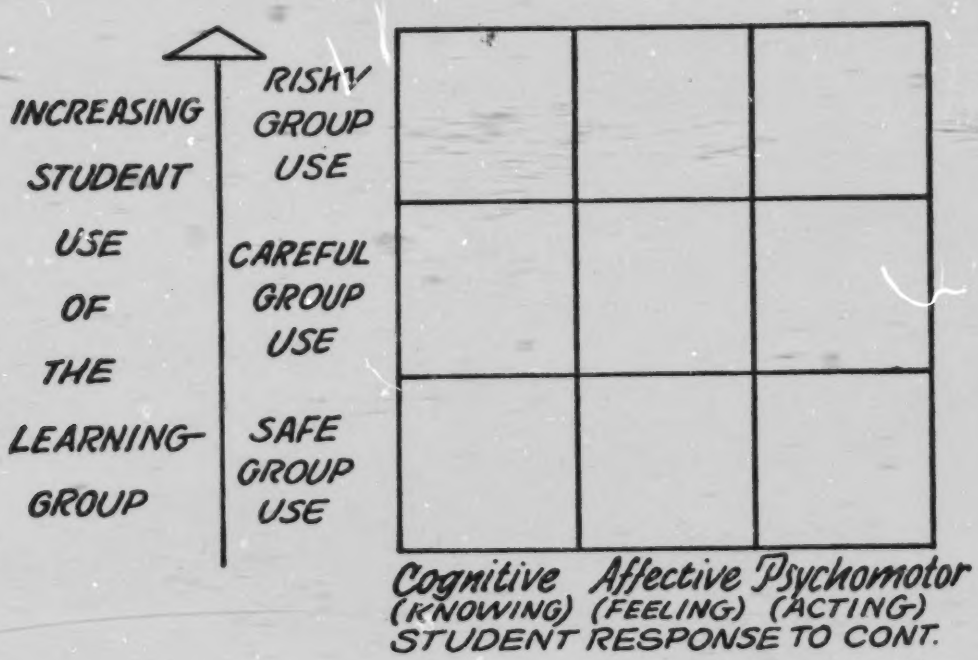
The Student Use of Group Dimension. The second, or student use of group dimension, describes the purpose of the learning group. The student

uses the group to practise new behaviours. He uses feedback and criticism from the group to modify behaviours new to him. He studies individuals in his group as models for new behaviours; and he uses the group as a setting in which to develop his skills of self expression. The group affects its members most when they have developed a strong sense of mutual trust and an interest in helping each other through the lessons.

The group provides both acceptance and challenge; all acceptance makes everyone feel good, but inhibits improvement in skills and development of problem-solving capabilities; all challenge makes people react defensively and become more set in ineffective behaviours; therefore, the group strives to seek an essential balance between the two.

Behaviours characteristic of the third level do not replace those of the second or the first level, nor do those in second level replace those of the first level. The student retains the safe group and uses behaviours that serve him well; to assist him in his necessary learnings, the coach encourages him to add to his behaviours the more venturesome ones characteristic of the two upper levels.

The following chart illustrates the increasing student use of the learning group.

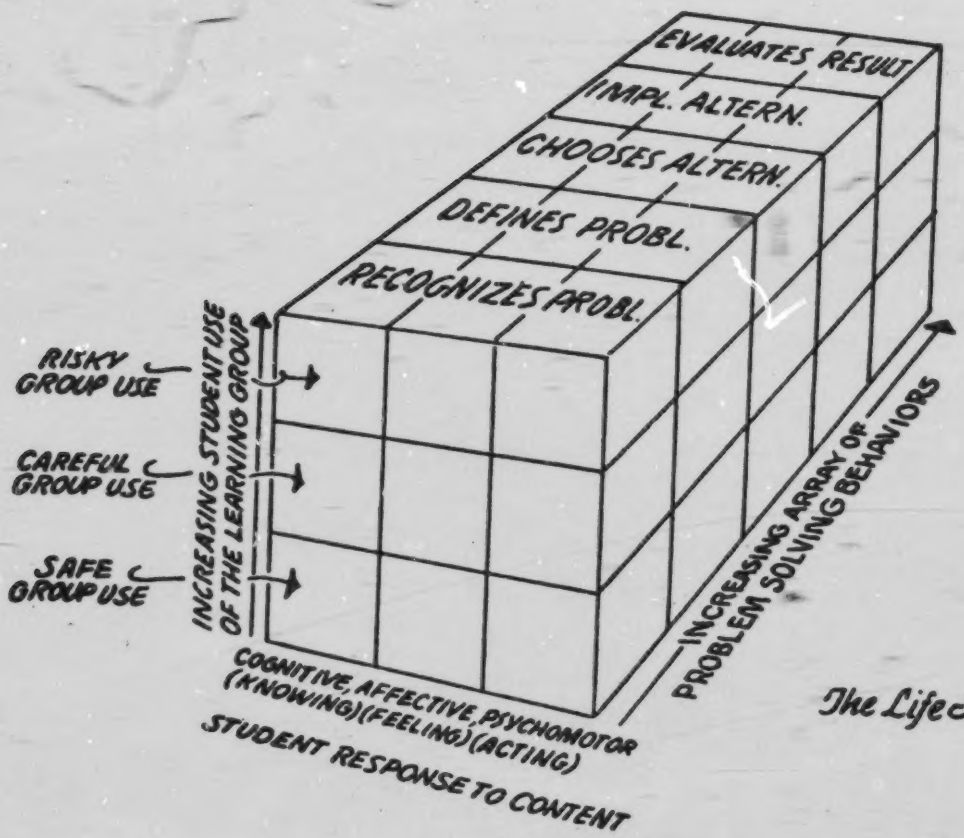


– THE DIMENSIONS OF STUDENT RESPONSE TO CONTENT AND USE OF THE LEARNING GROUP

The Problem-Solving Dimension. The learner could use both the knowledge and student use of group dimensions to their fullest, and still achieve none of the objectives of the Life Skills course. The complete Life Skills Process/Content Model requires a third dimension. The Life Skills student uses a whole array of problem-solving behaviours.

In gross terms, he recognizes a problem situation, defines the problem, chooses an alternative solution, implements it, and evaluates the result; of course, each of these processes contains many sub-processes. As he matures in the course, the student increases the array of the problem-solving behaviours he uses until, ideally, he uses them as the situation requires. This array of behaviour provides the third dimension.

The chart below illustrates all three dimensions.



The Life Skills Process Model

The Use of Process in the Life Skills Course

Unlike many "education" programs which assume transfer, or leave it to the student, success of the Life Skills course requires that students make effective transfer of their problem-solving skills. The persons using the Life Skills course must concern themselves with the process which subsumes all others in the Life Skills course, that of transfer of skills from the training centre to everyday life.

The more the behaviours appear in the psychomotor domain, the greater the conviction the coach has that the students can make effective transfer. It necessarily follows then, that the students must manifest a disposition to change by practising the new behaviours. Talking about or reacting to new ideas is not enough. All connected with the course implementation must ensure that all students receive encouragement to apply the new behaviours, and support in their performances when they do so.

Phase Sequence. The course design provides the student with an opportunity and the skills to study his problems, or to put it another way, to study himself as a problem. Though that sounds pretentious, it casts the direction of the course rather well, because the student does examine assumptions about himself; he analyzes his strengths and weaknesses and sets personal self-improvement goals; he develops related plans, learns an array of effective skills and practises them in a variety of situations. Finally, he evaluates his effectiveness in the use of the skills, and he plans for further personal development after completing the Life Skills course. In short, he uses problem-solving processes to deal with his personal situation.

The lesson model has five phases: the stimulus, the evocation, the objective enquiry/skills preparation, the application and the evaluation phases. While related to the five stages of problem-solving in the Life Skills Process/Content Model, the names of the phases suggest the approach used by the coach in presenting the lesson.

In the stimulus, the coach presents the problem; in one lesson he uses a film; in another, a case study; and in yet another, a trust exercise. During the stimulus the coach might provoke, inform, or question; whatever his method, he aims to stimulate discussion among the students.

In the evocation, the coach encourages the students to express their opinions and feelings related to the stimulus. Using facilitative techniques, he remains non-judgemental, assisting students to verbalize their concerns. As the students share their knowledge about the topic, the coach helps them clarify the problem situation, classify the ideas expressed and define the problem. He helps them formulate fact-finding questions for investigation in the next section.

In the objective enquiry/skills preparation, the coach acts as a teacher or a guide. He helps the students seek out and relate new knowledge to the problem they defined; he helps them search for answers to their questions and to practise new skills; they might study themselves on video, or use check lists to examine their behaviour; they might study films, books, clippings from magazines; or they might seek information from resource persons in the community.

In the application phase of the lesson, the coach helps the student apply knowledge and skills to the solution of a problem. Whenever possible, he applies his solution in the real life situation. The real life situation changes as the course develops: in the early part of the course, the student applies his skill in the here and now situation of the learning group; later he applies his skill with visitors, in the community, in the home, or in planned simulations of other real situations. In the lesson, "Identifying Strengths of the Family", for example, video equipment is moved to a home to film a family meal; the group analyzes the tape, listing the strengths they see. In the lesson, "Using Available Help to Get Out of a Money Trap", a student presents his case to one or more finance companies or credit unions, asking for help. The group discusses the advice given and helps the student plan his course of action to solve his financial problem. In the lesson, "Exploring Expectations of Employers", employers come to the learning group to participate in a dialogue during the evocation phase of the lesson. In the application phase, each student seeks further information at an employer's place of business.

In the evaluation phase, the students and coach assess what they did and how they helped each other. They evaluate their own behaviour in group interaction and evaluate the processes used to solve the problem; they evaluate whether each student met the skill objectives set for the lesson. In most lessons, the students evaluate through discussion, analysis of video tapes or with check lists. In one lesson, the students sequence picture charts to show the relationship between the processes used; in another, they assess their reaction to a confrontation by the coach.

B. LIFE SKILLS COACH TRAINING COURSE

Introduction

William Kvaraceus, speaking of the education of the disadvantaged, states: "One rather significant finding is that education has had relatively little impact on attitudes and behaviour. Changes do occur but the change is to produce more of the same...the school serves to reinforce what is already present."

The "already present" very often consists of ineffectual attitudes and behaviours, the result of a long process of conditioned inferiority. Discriminatory practices together with exploitation and privation are experienced constantly by the disadvantaged as they attempt to meet their basic human needs. These dehumanizing realities of daily existence convince the disadvantaged of their inferiority and result in feelings, attitudes and behaviours which reflect their frustration and hopelessness.

Kvaraceus continues "...a deliberate effort to change the self-concept of students will appreciably affect their total education as well as their personal experience." To do this requires that most teachers also must change.

A major change in the teacher's self-concept means a shift from his conception of himself as the operative agent in a selective, status-giving system to that of operative agent in a system which enables each individual to develop fully his pre-existing potential.

There exists now a body of well documented research which very clearly sets out the teaching abilities necessary to accomplish the tasks.

Robert R. Carkhuff in The Development of Human Resources states: "The helper will be most effective during the early phases of helping when he responds to the helpee. When the helper responds to the helpee, the helpee becomes involved in a process of self-exploration leading to self-understanding."

He defines the responsive conditions which facilitate this process as follows:

a. Empathy or understanding - the ability to see things as another sees them and to communicate what he sees to the other.

b. Respect or positive regard - the ability to respond to another in such a way as to let him know you care for him and believe in his ability to do something about his problem and his life.

c. Concreteness or specificity - the ability to enable another to be specific about feelings and his own experiences.

Carkhuff demonstrates that the "helper will be most effective during the later phases of helping when he initiates action". The helper gives the process direction, facilitating the helpee's deeper understanding of himself which leads to the development of strategies for acting upon this understanding. These coaching initiatives are described as:

a. Genuineness or authenticity - the ability to be real in a relationship with others.

b. Confrontation - the ability to tell another what you've been hearing as you've been listening to him. To advise the other of the difference in your respective perceptions of reality, then following through and working out the differences between you.

c. Immediacy - the ability to understand different feelings and experiences that are going on between you and another person. The helper must direct the helpee's attention to what is going on at that moment so that the helpee can more fully understand himself.

The responsive and initiative conditions are basic but must be supplemented by other abilities. Based on results of research, Nathan Gage in Teachers for the Disadvantaged states four additional characteristics or behaviours which are desirable.

a. Cognitive organization - the ability to apply dynamic sets of "organizers" or "models" to the subject matter which results in meaningful learning and understanding, as opposed to rote learning or memorizing. These organizers or models permit the discrimination of new material from that previously learned and make possible the integration of the new with the old at a high level of abstraction, generality and inclusiveness. This high level of abstraction

and generality has the advantage that the product of all the learned material may be at a higher level than the learned material itself.

b. Orderliness - the ability to be systematic and methodical in self management. Consistency is demonstrated in the management of the learning situation.

c. Indirectness - the ability to give students "opportunities to engage in overt behaviours, such as talking and problem-solving, relevant to the learning objectives". Indirectness represents a willingness to forbear furnishing the student with everything he needs to know. It is associated with the teachers' ability to encourage participation and initiative.

d. Ability to solve instructional problems - ability to solve problems "unique to his work in a particular subdivision" of his calling. That is, teachers should be more proficient at solving problems in their specialty areas than teachers who are required to teach other subjects or persons of equal qualifications who do not teach at all. Good teachers need a unique body of Problem Solving Skills.

The training program for Life Skills coaches is designed to equip the coaches with all these previously described abilities so that they may be in fact effective teachers and truly "authentic helpers".

Functions of the Coach

In the Life Skills course, a primary force to change behaviours is the behaviour-oriented learning group. It is the role of the coach to facilitate meaningful learning experiences and help the students to apply their knowledge and test new behaviours in solving problems in a wide range of life situations. How the coach functions depends not only upon the guidance he receives from the Life Skills lesson and his supervisor, but also upon his style, the nature of the group, his perceptions, his sensitivity and his competence in meeting the demands of new situations. Nevertheless, it is possible to classify the functions. Tannenbaum, Weschler and Massarik in discussing the role of a human relations trainer describe five main categories of behaviour which are closely related to the functions of a Life Skills coach.

1. Creating Situations Conducive to Learning. The coach helps structure some of the situations in which the students interact. If the coach presents his lessons skillfully, the relations between students provide numerous focal points for useful learning. For example, the cautious use of brief socio-metric questions (indications of liking, desirability as work partner, recognition of potentially useful life skills, etc.) involving the members of the group in a given lesson typically yields data on the way each group member perceives his fellows. As each student experiences the various problem-solving and human interaction situations, the coach helps to diagnose and comment on them. Each student gains potentially useful insights, which in turn can be strengthened by peer evaluation and group discussion.

2. Establishing a Model of Behaviour. The coach provides a model for behaviour by his activity in the group, his approach to problem-solving, his acceptance of criticism, his non-judgemental comments, his willingness to evaluate his own behaviour, and his ability to raise questions and to express his own feelings. By his behaviour, he helps establish acceptance and freedom of expression in which the group can discuss interpersonal problems that otherwise might be avoided.

3. Introducing New Values. The coach, by his behaviour, implicitly or explicitly introduces new values into the group. The way he reflects feelings, clarifies comments, and actively behaves focuses attention on those problems which he feels the group should eventually handle. For example, his willingness to relinquish a position of authority and leadership carries with it a host of implications for the group.

4. Facilitating the Flow of Communication. The coach helps to identify barriers to communication between individuals. By raising questions, clarifying issues, and encouraging participation of all members of the group he facilitates the development of mutual understanding and agreement. Frequently when sources of difficulty are below the level of awareness, the coach, who is less personally involved with these difficulties than the group, is better able to identify the problems and help bring about their recognition and potential solution.

5. Participating as an "Expert". The coach, as an "expert", is often required to help the students learn problem-solving approaches and skills, basic communication skills, and other behavioural skills helpful in facilitating the group process.

At times the coach introduces knowledge derived from his experience or from other sources, which the group may want in order to proceed with the solution of a given problem. However, many groups, particularly at their initial stages, push responsibility for their progress onto the coach. There are attendant costs to the students in doing this. By putting the coach in a position of answering questions, of making decisions for the group, of establishing goals and setting group values, the students' involvement in the training is reduced. Therefore, the coach tries to leave maximum responsibility for determinations affecting the group itself with the students.

There is one additional function of the coach which might often be overlooked - that of the "group member" function. The fact that the learning group is a cultural unit implies that it has all the potential aspects of group identification, cohesion and growth. The group builds expectations for all persons in the training situation, and this includes the coach.

The coach, of course, does not perform the typical membership function. From the outset he is a competent practitioner of group problem-solving skills. As the group begins to "take over" and begins to see the different contributions of the members, the group identifies a point in its growth when it overtly indicates that the coach "is now a member of the learning group". At the covert level, the coach might have been a member of the group long before the students identified this as being so. The coach may be a unique member, but as the helping group matures so does each member become unique in a number of different ways.

The coach training course consists of training in four major areas of competence:

1. Creative Problem Solving - establishes in the coaches the desirable teacher behaviours described by Gage. This cognitive thrust intersects with Carkhuff's "responsive and initiative skills" model at the point of "developing courses of action".

2. Structured Human Relations Training - equips coaches with expertise in the "responsive and initiative" skills delineated by Carkhuff. These are problem-solving skills applied to the specific challenge of interpersonal relations.

3. Coaching Techniques - prepares coaches in additional techniques and strategies necessary to carry out the "coaching functions". This unit develops functionality in all the process skills including group dynamics, role-playing, etc., which emerge in managing the Life Skills lessons.

4. Life Skills Course Content - familiarizes the coach with and enhances his own abilities in all the coping skills which the Life Skills student is expected to apply to his own life. It includes a coaching practicum and Life Skills dissemination material.

Course Orientation

The Life Skills coach training course involves learning to perform, at a mastery level, a wide range of behavioural skills; at the same time, acquiring a cognitive and theoretical understanding of these skills. It is an eight-week course with some 280 hours of scheduled training. An additional 10 hours per week of individual study is necessary.

During this course you must apply yourself with energy and commitment if you are to achieve the level of competence necessary to function as a Life Skills coach.

Furthermore, you are expected to grow in maturity, flexibility and life skills, since as coach, you are a model of the skills to be learned by the students. The students are also required to apply the skills to their lives; so too, the training you receive in this course must be similarly applied. You must be able to explain any illustration with personal examples from your life, the value, meaning, purpose, use and limitations of the skills taught, and model them for the students and in your daily life. This is a literal use of the "practise what you preach" admonition.

The coach training course and, to a certain extent, the Life Skills course are based on the "practise", "use" and "teach" (PUT) model. Thus you will practise skills in a training setting, then use and teach them in your life situation and in coaching Life Skills students.

The coach training course is designed to involve you actively in your education. The training emphasis is on the productive and creative aspects of learning, based on a solid foundation of behavioural skills and theoretical understanding. To learn something only to give it back in a test or other such minimally productive manner is not enough; what is important is what you do with the learning - what gains you make in new ideas, approaches, questions, procedures, methods, skills, problems, solutions and so on.

For instance, when we say that you are to understand something, the word "understand" means that you (a) state and explain it in your own words; (b) give realistic examples of it; (c) recognize it in various circumstances, how it can be used in different circumstances, and how it can be changed and adapted; (d) describe situations where it is appropriate, useful or helpful and situations where it is not (perhaps even harmful); (e) recognize connections between it and other facts, ideas, theories, methods, skills and approaches; (f) foresee some of its consequences; (g) state its opposite or converse; (h) use it in various ways and in various situations; (i) explain and teach it to others so that they, too, "understand" it.

This usage of the word "teach" involves explaining, illustrating with realistic examples, demonstrating and modelling the purpose, usefulness, value, limitations and situational constraints of the concept, approach or skill. The success of the instruction is measured by how well the student/trainee understands the material, not by any feelings of accomplishment the teacher may have about his performance.

Cognitive Learning

There are two basic methods used in the coach training course to ensure that you understand (as defined earlier) the content of the course. One of these is spontaneous discussion, the other, a log book.

Spontaneous Discussion

This method tests your ability to orally communicate your understanding of the course content and its relation to life and to Life Skills. At the conclusion of each unit, some or all of you will be selected by a random method to explain and discuss the content of the unit, integrating it with the contents of prior units, to the satisfaction of the group and the trainer. This procedure will also be instituted at any point in the course where the trainer feels there is a need for a summary and integration of content to date. The use of random selection techniques provides an equal chance for each of you to be selected to discuss, and permits no one (not even the trainer) to know who will be selected ahead of time.

Any method the trainer chooses to use to accomplish the discussion goal is acceptable, provided it meets the random selection criterion. However, the following two methods are likely to be used: (a) a sub-group of three to six trainees is randomly selected to discuss the materials using one or more of these formats - group-on-group, interviews, panels, questions and answers, etc. All sub-group members are to demonstrate their understanding; (b) one trainee is randomly selected to begin discussion, then other trainees are subsequently selected to carry on, until all the material is covered. Anyone could be called on more than once or not at all in a given session.

No one is excused from discussion. If your number comes up, you must discuss and demonstrate your understanding. If you are not present, and do not have an excuse acceptable to the trainer, then you will be counted as if you could not perform.

Log Book

This method tests your ability to communicate in written form your understanding of the course content and its relation to life and to Life Skills. Throughout the course, you will keep a log book - a record of your journey through Life Skills coach training. In it, you record your

reactions, observations, evaluations, thoughts, explanations, examples, criticisms, alterations, creations and any other productions or originations. These will arise from readings, films, field trips, lectures, talks, rap sessions, surveys, presentations, conversations, lessons given, exercises, tests, parties, and any other experiences you have during training.

Your log should be a fairly exact identification of what you did, sufficiently complete to inform a reader of all the circumstances of your experiences. You should give the author, title, source, publisher and pages read of any reading you do, along with a brief synopsis - enough to give a reader an idea of the content. For other experiences, enough of the event should be described to give a reader some idea of what went on.

The emphasis in this log is on your reactions to events and activities, discussions of matters you feel are of special importance, difficulties and misunderstandings discovered or resolved, strengths or weaknesses discovered, areas for improvement, interests discovered or developed, new approaches, ideas, concepts, etc. Anything belongs in the log book that shows what you have done, and what you have actively contributed toward your intellectual, emotional and behavioural growth, both as a personal model for others and as a Life Skills coach.

Again, emphasis is on your understanding (as defined earlier) of readings and events. Extensive summaries are discouraged, but brief summary statements may be necessary to clarify some of your comments. The feedback you receive from the trainer on your log book will guide you toward understanding and away from the rote summarization.

Your log should be kept in a standard sized (8 1/2" x 11") note book. It should be reasonably legible, but definitely not retyped or copied over. The trainer will review log books of randomly selected trainees on randomly selected days.

Course Materials

The following books are used during the course. A bibliography and supplementary readings are listed with the training units and are integrated into the unit material through the Cognitive Learning Instructional Procedure. Instruction in operating and understanding the required audio-visual hard- and software is introduced at various points throughout the course on the first occasion that the particular equipment is to be used.

1. CURTISS, P.R., Warren, P.W., et al; The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching. This book will be used throughout the Life Skills Coach Training course. The content of the book has been written and selected to increase your understanding of the training material or to assist you in coaching Life Skills students. A thorough knowledge of this material is essential.

2. HIMSL, R., et al; Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving; Saskatchewan NewStart Inc., 1972. This book contains the major theoretical statement regarding the Life Skills course; it must be thoroughly understood.

3. The Life Skills Coaching Manual; Saskatchewan NewStart Inc., 1972. This is the curriculum of the Life Skills course, including a guide and 60 lessons.

4. Manufacturers' operating manuals for video and other audio-visual equipment.

5. WARREN, V.B.; How Adults Can Learn More--Faster; National Association for Public School Adult Education, 1961. This is a brief introduction to adult education useful for helping adults in upgrading programs.

6. PARNES, S.J.; Creative Behavior Workbook; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967.

7. WARREN, P.W., Gryba, E. and Kyba, R.; The Problems and Needed Life Skills Of Adolescents; Training Research and Development Station, 1972. This book describes the difficulties of growing up in the modern world. It provides initial specifications for adapting the Life Skills course for the general adolescent student population, with special consideration for Northern schools.

8. WILLIAMS, J.B. and Mardell, E.A.; Life Skills Course for Corrections Training Research and Development Station; 1973. The initial specifications for adapting the Life Skills course for medium or maximum security correctional centres are described.

Contents of the Coach Training Course

UNIT I - INTRODUCTION TO THE DYNAMICS OF LIFE SKILLS COACHING

This unit includes information under the following headings:

A. Overview of the Life Skills Course

B. Life Skills Coach Training Course

Contents

Lecture, illustrated with audio-visual aids, to familiarize participants with the Life Skills course and provide an introduction and orientation to the Life Skills coach training course.

Readings

The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching Unit I
Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving
as assigned.

UNIT II - USING AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCES

Contents

"Hands on" training with the audio-visual hardware and related software used in the Life Skills course; special emphasis on video equipment.

Readings

Manufacturer's operating manual for video
The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching Unit II

UNIT III - STRUCTURED GROUP PROCESS: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

This unit includes the following sub-units:

A. Resolving Interpersonal Needs

B. BSD As A Model For Interpersonal Behaviour

C. Toward Effective Communication: Problems and Solutions

D. Helpful and Harmful Group Behaviours

E. A Comparison Of Human Development With Psychological Development In Training Groups

Contents

You participate in and learn techniques for initiating and maintaining productive interpersonal relations within the group. This unit is focused on training behavioural skills and providing the conceptual framework which, when combined, result in the development of an effective Problem Solving Group.

Readings

The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching Unit III A
III B
III C
III D
III E

as assigned.

Please note that sub-unit IIIE should be read at the end of Unit III following the experiential section.

UNIT IV - CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Contents

You learn, through intensive practise, a wide array of strategies and techniques within a problem-solving system for attacking and resolving problem situations.

Readings

The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching Unit IV
Creative Behaviour Guidebook - Sidney Parnes

UNIT V - STRUCTURED HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING

This unit includes discussion under the following headings:

The Modelling Function
The Helping Process
Summary of the Objectives of Helping
An Approach for Achieving the Helping Objectives

Contents

You learn that the effectiveness of any helping relationship is determined by the presence of certain dynamics. You learn to discriminate among and within these dynamics and to communicate them in the process of the relationship.

Readings

The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching Unit V

UNIT VI - DEVELOPING COURSES OF ACTION

This unit includes the following sub-units:

A. Behavioural Counselling

B. Contingency Management

C. The Process of Balanced Self-Determinism Training

Contents

In these three sub-units, together with Unit IV, Creative Problem Solving, you learn how to use the processes and techniques of each as tools in helping students achieve their goals.

Readings

The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching Unit VI A
VI B
VI C

as assigned.

*VI B - "Contingency Management in Education and Other Equally Exciting Places". This book will be made available by the trainer.

UNIT VII - ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS COACHING SKILLS

This unit includes the following sub-units:

A. Role-Playing

B. Questioning Techniques

C. The Case Method

D. Discussion Leading

Contents

You learn the process, technique and application of these coaching skills as they are used in the Life Skills course.

Readings

The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching Unit VII A
VII B
VII C
VII D

as assigned.

UNIT VIII - THE COACHING PRACTICUM

Contents

You will demonstrate your understanding of coaching theory and practice through presenting life skills lessons to your peers and Life Skills students. Remedial skills training will be based on video recordings, and the evaluation of other coaches in training, of your trainer, and of the students.

Readings

The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching Unit VIII
Lessons from The Life Skills Coaching Manual
as assigned.

UNIT IX - EVALUATING STUDENT PROGRESS

Contents

You learn to use a variety of evaluation instruments to measure student progress. You develop and test an evaluation method of your own which can be used by another evaluator.

Readings

The Dynamics of Life Skills Coaching Unit IX

Bibliography

GAGE, N.L.; "Desirable Behaviours of Teachings" in Usdan, M.D. and Bertolaet, R. (eds.); Teachers for the Disadvantaged; Follett, 1960.

HIMSL, R., et al; Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving; Saskatchewan NewStart Inc., 1972.

KVARACEUS, W.C., et al; Poverty, Education and Race Relations: Studies and Proposals; Allyn and Bacon, 1967.

TANNENBAUM, R., Weschler, I.R., and Massarik, F.; Leadership and Organization; McGraw-Hill, 1961.

*CARKHUFF, Robert R.; The Development of Human Resources, Education, Psychology and Social Change; Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1971.

* Recommended for supplementary reading.

UNIT II

USING AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCES

A. AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

Audio-visual resources are categorized as hardware and software. The hardware most used in coaching the Life Skills course consists of: video equipment: camera, videotape recorder and monitor; carousel slide projector; audio-cassette tape recorder; and filmstrip projector.

The software most used with this equipment consists of videotape: blank and prerecorded; 35 mm slides; overhead projectuals; cassette audio-tapes: blank and prerecorded; 35 mm filmstrips.

There are additional materials used which defy categorization, for instance the flip chart, bulletin boards, magazines and newspapers, and various instructional aids and reading materials.

Life Skills coaches must be able to operate and utilize both hardware and software. The most practical approach to training is "hands on" experience presented under the direction of people who know about the resources and who can show you how to operate and use them efficiently. Provision is made in the coach training course for this kind of training.

Training in the use of various AV recorders and projectors will occur throughout the course as each type of equipment is used in your own training.

It is important that you know precisely what you are expected to understand as a result of this training. The objectives listed below set this out.

Video Equipment

Use

You will understand and use the manufacturer's manual for the video recorder, camera, monitor and related software so that you can operate and maintain the video equipment as an instructional tool.

Teach

You will understand and teach to Life Skills students the basic operational and maintenance procedures for video equipment, using the Life Skills lesson, "Seeing Oneself On Video".

Carousel Slide Projector, Overhead Projector, Audio-Cassette Recorder and Filmstrip Projector

Use

You will become proficient at assembling, operating, maintaining and using the above-mentioned equipment and related software. You will use these aids, materials, and equipment both in coaching Life Skills and in explaining Life Skills to others.

Teach

You will understand and teach to Life Skills students the basic operating, maintenance and utilization procedures for the hardware and related software as called for in various Life Skills lessons.

B. VIDEOTAPE PLAYBACK IN PROGRAMS OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Videotape playback is a very powerful training tool. People see themselves as others see them, often for the first time. That "videotape playback gives added force to learning prompted by other means" is a conclusion reached by the Training Station after over four years of continuous use of VTR with over 500 students. As a result of this experience, the Station has identified many uses, which depend upon four qualities of VTR: displacement, repetition, interruption and involvement. Displacement takes place in time, place and emotional situation. Repetition refers to the ability to repeat the action for study. Interruption refers to the quality which permits the breaking of a sequence for analysis. Involvement means the universal power of the medium to hold the viewer, especially when he sees himself on the screen.

There are seven particular functions which videotape replay can provide: information-giving, personality development, learning social skills, learning job skills, community development, evaluating projects, and supervision. Each function is discussed separately below.

Information-Giving

Videotapes are an economical and efficient method of storing a variety of presentations which can be shown at appropriate times. This is particularly valuable in isolated communities which are without convenient access to resource personnel, film libraries, etc. The same purposes are served where resource personnel do visit a project, but for limitation of space or time, are not able to make presentations or engage in discussions with all participants. In such instances, a videotape of the meeting can be played later to other groups and discussed with them. Some resource personnel prefer to tape presentations in advance, and then replay them to the group, stopping and starting the machine to discuss questions. This has proved quite effective; the resource people, knowing they will see themselves, often do a better job than they would in a live presentation. The fact that they are there for the replay does not in any way detract from the possibility of discussion.

Videotapes of classes in action, of special events, of specially designed presentations, and so on, can be used to explain programs to visitors, thus serving a useful dissemination function. The fact that videotapes can be erased makes film production possible and immediate, thus permitting the preparation of presentations for any particular group. Description, instruction and illustration of special techniques by specialists can be videotaped for use in the classroom. Videotapes can also be used to store documentation of historic events.

A videotape is more valuable than an audiotape recording of an important conference from which a verbatim or summary report is to be produced. The VTR shows who is speaking, something which is often left in doubt with an audiotape if many people are participating.

Teaching by VTR may also be used in basic educational training. Some examples include: teaching of reading, especially for illiterates; developing listening skills and comprehension work related to listening; explanation of difficult concepts and demonstration of practical activities in mathematics; demonstration of science principles and experiments; teaching of oral English for those who do not speak English well; training instructors in the techniques of teaching oral English.

Personality Development

VTR, which is used extensively in the teaching of Life Skills, has profound but not threatening effects upon students. For the first time, many students see themselves as others see them, with all the rationalized or unnoticed personal foibles which they have used to defeat their own self-development. The fact that the students can see how these operate, and analyse them and their impact on themselves and their relationships with others, and then discuss it with fellow students, provides a great deal of motivation, insight and help in the development of personality. This form of feedback, objective as it is, has been found to be more complete but less emotional than that provided by coaches and other students. VTR usually provides both positive and negative feedback, and is thus both challenging and supportive.

Videotape can be used in the homes of students to record family interaction; this has been valuable in the teaching of family living skills. Videotape replay can also be used in individual counselling to show the student how his behaviour in group and life situations reflects the way he handles problems.

Learning Social Skills

Perhaps the greatest potential for videotape replay is in the area of learning the social skills required for competence and success in family living, use of leisure time, interactions with community agents such as police, working on the job, and in working together as a team with friends, neighbours and others. Through role playing and other simulated experiences, the students can demonstrate their abilities and attitudes in a variety of situations, and can assess and practise their skills repeatedly until they are quite competent. This may be done in the context of an entire lesson on one subject, or in a whole series of micro-lessons which cumulatively provide skills necessary in more complex social actions. The playback of one or two people in role-playing situations, or the entire group in discussion, frequently provides the stimulus for new lessons which the students had not previously recognized as being needed.

VTR can be used as the vehicle for presenting a case study instead of having it read; this is useful if the case is dynamic and short.

A tape can be made as a model or illustration of the formal problem-solving process which underlies the Life Skills program. The performance of an actual student group with some experience in the process could be taped and replayed for successive intakes of students and for coaches-in-training.

Preparation of videotapes can be valuable to illustrate the processes of conducting personal business, such as the following: opening a bank account, writing cheques, etc.; buying a travel ticket, getting to and on the conveyance, relinquishing and retreiving luggage, etc.; making hotel reservations, registering, help with luggage, checking out, phone calls and laundry in a hotel, etc.; buying a money order, registering a letter, insuring a parcel; getting and giving receipts when money changes hands. The viewing of such tapes should be followed by discussion.

Learning Job Skills

VTR is very useful in training students for a variety of jobs, particularly those involving a great deal of interaction with people, such as instructional coaches, teaching aides, social work aides, retail sales clerks, and owner/managers of small businesses.

In the Life Skills course, videotapes are used extensively to give feedback to the students both as groups and individuals. It becomes unnecessary for the instructor to be present for all feedback sessions as the students become proficient in operating the equipment and in criticizing their own performances. VTR is used to train students in interviewing skills; students are able as a group to analyse each interview. This has the added advantage of getting away from the traditional concept that the instructor is the only judge of competence. VTR is used also in teaching students to make effective presentations to small and large groups.

The use of videotape in training students for business occupations permits various selling skills to be practised and delicate situations rehearsed. The role-playing requires that the student not only know what he wants to say but also how to say it effectively. The practice in role-playing and feedback develops skills, initiative and ingenuity in dealing with a large variety of situations.

In training instructional staff, VTR is used to present model lessons, for microteaching (teaching and drilling of very specific skills), and for evaluation of skills, attitudes and knowledge. Trainees are encouraged to practise their delivery of lessons in front of a video camera, and replay it to assess their capabilities.

Community Development

Videotape replay can play a valuable role in the process of self-analysis in which an isolated community can prepare a list of priorities for development, and can achieve some commitment to these. The use of videotape feedback of such meetings could also help program administrators compare and contrast their assumptions with those of the people, and thus aid in program formulation at both local and regional levels.

VTR can be used at meetings in isolated communities in cases where the meetings usually rely on films for outside entertainment. It is a simple matter to videotape the films and dub in an Indian language sound track. This would allow many non-English speaking people in northern areas to benefit from such acculturating media.

Evaluating Projects

Videotape replay is very valuable in the training of observers to develop skills that provide reliable data on individual and group processes. It is also used by research staff to study and improve their effectiveness in conducting interviews. Video equipment can be used to relay analysis of interactions made by observers to other locations where the data are tabulated for computer analysis. Videotapes of students at various stages of a course can be used for the students' own evaluation of growth as well as by research personnel for the same purpose.

Video recording and playback is used to provide coaches with the practice necessary to complete rating scales, in the same way as VTR is used in the training of observers. Videotaping of lessons has also proved valuable for the purposes of review and analysis in the development of better lessons.

Research reports would be less "dry", and more informative in the subjective areas, if accompanied by film clips (kinescopes) made from videotapes recorded during the training process.

Supervision

A significant difference between child and adult education is that adults always have the option of dropping out if they are dissatisfied; and they do so in very large numbers in retraining programs. Adult education is further handicapped by the fact that there are virtually no training programs for teachers in adult training, particularly in the critical area of life skills. Thus, it is advantageous for all instructors to be able to watch the progress of the course on closed-circuit television. This permits the personal development of the students and their group activities to be monitored, and also provides an insight into the abilities of the coach. It enables the trainer to come to the aid of the group or the coach as required, and it provides an opportunity for the coaches to study their own skills and make improvements.

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CULCLASURE, D.; Effective Use of Audiovisual Media; Prentice-Hall, 1969.

*NIEMI, J.A. (ed.); Mass Media and Adult Education; Educational Technology Publications, 1971.

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*SOURCE COLLECTIVE (eds.); Source Catalog No. 1: Communications; Swallow Press, 1971.

ZELMER, A.C.L. (ed.); The Sleeping Medium: A Report of the Community Television Study Project; University of Alberta, 1971.

* Recommended for supplementary reading.

UNIT III

STRUCTURED GROUP PROCESS: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

A. RESOLVING INTERPERSONAL NEEDS

The small group can be thought of as a kind of island within society which accurately reflects the composition and structure of the larger society. Since variables can be controlled and processes analyzed more easily in the small group, it is an excellent environment in which to acquire the skills of relating to and interacting with others. The learning which does occur must be transferred and applied to the larger society.

Membership in the small group becomes almost a fundamental need for the individual. It is the dynamics of membership which gives rise to problems. To achieve membership, a person must meet in a balanced way three interpersonal needs: inclusion, affection and control.

Inclusion: the need for a sense of belonging with others; the need to be included. Inclusion is expressed in the need to attract the attention and interest of others and to be a member of the group, yet a distinct and unique person within it.

Affection: the need to feel close, to feel personal involvement, and to feel that one is in emotional communication with another. The affection need is expressed by giving and receiving; its workings can be seen in both attraction and aversion between individuals in the group. Some deal with this need by being equally friendly to all others by remaining aloof from all.

Control: the need for control over others and the need to be controlled. The control need can be observed as a continuum in the decision-making process among people. It involves power, authority and influence. Control needs within the group are usually resolved by the establishment of a "pecking order"; this order changes from day to day but serves as a kind of base line from which modifications are made.

A balance must be sought among these three needs and within each.

Inclusion needs predominate in the formation of the group; control and affection are dynamics whose influences are felt in the established group. Inclusion is concerned with one's relative position of "in" or "out", affection with "close" or "far", and control with "top" or "bottom".

Interaction with others presents no problem for one who has achieved a balance among and within the three dynamics. He is at ease alone or in the company of others. As to participation, he can function at a low, high or medium level. He may choose to be strongly committed to a group or he may withhold commitment when he feels it is appropriate to do so. Such an individual has a strong underlying belief in his own worth and significance.

This hypothetical individual is functioning at an ideal level. Most people can grow in this direction through training and experimentation in the group. Very often we are dissatisfied with the way we are and have no clear idea of what we might become. Unit IIIB, which follows, introduces a way of looking at how you are and suggests a direction for your process of becoming.

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*SHUTZ, W.C.; FIRO: A Three-Dimensional Theory of Interpersonal Behavior; Holt, Rinehart and Winston; 1958.

* Recommended for supplementary reading.

B. BALANCED SELF-DETERMINED BEHAVIOUR AS A MODEL FOR INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOUR

Introduction

Has anyone ever cut in front of you in a line? Do you have difficulty saying "no" to persuasive salesmen? Can you comfortably begin a conversation with strangers at a party? Have you ever regretted "stepping on" someone else in trying to achieve your own goals?

Most people find situations such as these uncomfortable, worrisome, or irritating, yet often seem at a loss for just the "right" response. Behaviour which enables a person to act in his own best interests, to stand up for himself without undue worry, to exercise his rights without denying the rights of others is called Balanced Self-Determined behaviour (abbreviated hereafter as BSD behaviour). The Other-Determined, passive person (abbreviated as OD) is likely to think of the appropriate response after the opportunity has passed. The Selfish-Determined, aggressive person (abbreviated as SD) may not give it another thought, but may make a deep, and negative impression and may later be sorry for it. As a Life Skills coach, you can assist students in developing a more adequate array of BSD behaviours so that they may choose an appropriate and self-fulfilling response in a variety of situations.

This reading describes some methods of dealing with worry and fear through BSD training, since BSD behaviour inhibits or weakens worry and fear previously experienced in specific interpersonal relationships. When a student becomes more able to stand up for himself and do things on his own initiative, he reduces his usual worry or tenseness in key situations, and increases his sense of worth as a person. Each individual has the same basic right as the other person in an interpersonal relationship - roles and titles notwithstanding. More people must learn to exercise their rights, without infringing upon the rights of others.

Learning to assert one's rights as a human being is a vital issue in anyone's life. If the student must go through life inhibited, bowing

down to the wishes of others, holding his own desires inside himself, or conversely, destroying others in order to get his way, his feeling of personal worth will be low. The BSD individual is in charge of himself in interpersonal relationships, feels confident and capable without cockiness or hostility, is basically spontaneous in the expression of feelings and emotions, and is generally looked up to and admired by others. Commonly, people mistake SD and aggression for BSD, but the BSD individual does not malign others or deny their rights, running roughshod over people. The BSD person is open and flexible, genuinely concerned with the rights of others, yet at the same time able to establish very well his own rights. You must avoid using this as a gimmick on "how to manipulate others"; your only concern should be with facilitating, enduring and positive behaviour patterns in yourself and others.

The Necessity for BSD Training

If one analyzes family life, church, education, and business, he will note that BSD behaviour is frequently squelched. One common source of confusion involves interpreting all BSD behaviour as SD (selfish, aggressive, pushy, etc.) behaviour. Another source is the fact that those in power value OD (passive, agreeing) behaviour for others but not for themselves. Yet another source of confusion is the contrast between "recommended" and "rewarded" behaviour. Even though it is typically understood that one should respect the rights of others, all too often parents, teachers and churches contradict these values by their own actions. Tact, diplomacy, politeness, refined manners, modesty, and self-denial are generally praised, yet to "get ahead" it is often acceptable to "step on" others.

The male child is encouraged to be strong, brave, and dominant. His aggressiveness is condoned and accepted, as in the pride felt by a father whose son is in trouble for busting the neighbourhood bully in the nose. Ironically (and a source of much confusion for the child), the same father will likely encourage his son to have "respect for his elders", "to let others go first", and "be polite".

Although only just recently openly admitted, the athlete who participated in competitive sports knows that when he has been aggressive or perhaps "bent" the rules a little, it is O.K. because "it is not important how you play the game, it is important that you win". (The physical fitness

purist who would argue with this statement is invited to contrast the rewards for winning coaches with those for losing coaches who "build character".)

In the family, children are frequently censored if they decide to speak up for their rights. Hearing admonitions like "don't you dare talk to your mother (father) that way", "children are to be seen, not heard", "never let me hear you say that word again", is obviously not conducive to a child's assertion of self.

Teachers and school personnel discourage BSD behaviour in basically the same manner as parents. Quiet, well-behaved children who do not question the system are rewarded, whereas those who buck the system in some way are dealt with sternly. Many educators believe that a child's natural and spontaneous desire to learn is lost by the fourth or fifth grade.

The residue of parental and educational upbringing affects students' functioning in jobs and daily lives. Every employee is aware that frequently one must not do or say anything that will "rock the boat" in an organization. The boss is "above" and others are "below" and feel obliged to go along with what is expected even if obviously inappropriate. Employees' early work experiences teach that if you "speak up" you are likely not to obtain a raise or recognition, and may even lose the job. They quickly learn to be a "company man", to keep things running smoothly, to have few ideas of their own, to be careful how they act lest it "get back to the boss". The lesson is quite clear, in effect, not to be BSD in work.

The teachings of contemporary churches seem to indicate that to be self-determined in life is not the "religious" thing to do. Such qualities as humility, self-denial, and self-sacrifice are usually fostered to the exclusion of standing up for oneself. There is a mistaken notion that religious ideals of brotherhood are incompatible with feeling good about oneself and with being calm and confident in relationships with others. However, being assertive in life is in no way incongruent with the teachings of the major religious groups. The escape from freedom-restricting behaviour allows one to be of more service to others as well as to one's self.

It is common for a person who has been selfish or aggressive in a given situation to feel some guilt as a result of his behaviour. It is less widely recognized that the self-determined person also experiences guilt produced by childhood conditioning. The institutions of society have so carefully taught inhibiting expression of even one's reasonable rights, that one may feel badly for having stood up for himself.

It is not healthy for a person to suffer guilt feelings for being himself. Although families, schools, businesses and churches have tended to deny BSD behaviour, the contention is that each person has the right to be and to express himself, and to feel good - not guilty - about doing so, as long as he does not hurt others in the process. The anti-BSD influence of these basic social systems produces "built-in" limits on the self-fulfilling actions of many persons.

This reading is for all who wish to develop a more enhancing personal existence on their own, and for those instrumental in facilitating the personal growth of others. The concept of balanced self-determinism is needed by many persons. It is written with practical applications in mind. To be of greatest use, you, as coach, must familiarize yourself with the concept of BSD, recognize its validity in your own experience, and then apply its principles in your personal life and in Life Skills coaching.

BSD behaviour inhibits worry and fear in such a way that the two conditions are mutually exclusive. That is, when BSD increases, worry and fear decrease.

Definitions

Each person should be able to choose for himself how he will act in a given circumstance. If his "polite restraint" response is too well developed, he may be unable to make the choice to act as he would like to. If his aggressive response is overdeveloped, he may be unable to achieve his own goals without hurting others. This freedom to choose and to exercise self-control is made possible by the development of BSD responses for situations which have previously produced fear-based OD or SD behaviour.

Illustrations contrasting BSD with OD and SD actions help clarify these concepts. The pattern which appears in the following chart is demonstrated in each of the illustrations which follow. The chart displays several feelings and consequences typical for the person whose behaviour is OD, BSD, or SD. Also shown, for each of these modes of behaviour, are the likely consequences for the person toward whom the action is directed (the other).

OTHER-DETERMINED (OD)	BALANCED SELF-DETERMINED (BSD)	SELFISH-DETERMINED (SD)
Self	Self	Self
Self-denying	Self-enhancing	Self-enhancing at expense of other
Inhibited, passive	Expressive, active	Expressive, aggressive
Does not achieve desired goals	May achieve desired goals	Achieves desired goals by hurting others
Allows others to choose for him	Chooses for Self	Chooses for others
Hurt, anxious	Feels good about Self	Depreciates others
Other	Other	Other
Guilty or angry	Self-enhancing	Self-denying
Depreciates Self	Expressive	Hurt, defensive, humiliated
Achieves desired goals at Self's expense	May achieve desired goals	Does not achieve desired goals

As may be seen in the chart, in the case of an Other-Determined (OD) response in a given situation, the self if typically non-assertive, denying and inhibited from expressing actual feelings, seldom achieving own desired goals, allowing others to choose instead, and often feeling hurt and anxious as a result of inadequate behaviour.

Persons who carry their desire for self-determinism to the extreme of Selfish-Determined (SD), aggressive behaviour reach their goals at the expense of others. Although the SD person frequently finds his behaviour self-enhancing and expressive of his feelings in the situation, he usually hurts others in the process by making choices for them, minimizing their worth as persons. SD behaviour commonly results in a "put down" of the other. The other's rights have been denied, and he feels hurt, defensive, and humiliated. The other's goals in the situation, of course, are not achieved.

In contrast, Balanced Self-Determined (BSD) behaviour in the same situation is appropriately assertive and would be self-enhancing for the self, an honest expression of feeling. He will usually achieve his goals, having chosen for himself how he will act. A good feeling about himself typically accompanies the BSD response.

Similarily, when the consequences of these three contrasting behaviours are viewed from the perspective of the other (i.e., the individual toward whom the behaviour is directed), a parallel pattern emerges. OD behaviour often produces feelings ranging from sympathy to outright contempt in the other toward the OD person. Also, the other may feel guilt or anger at having achieved goals at the OD person's expense. In contrast, a transaction involving BSD enhances feelings of self-worth and permits full expression of self. In addition, while the self achieves his goals, the goals of the other may also be achieved.

In summary, then, it is clear that the self is hurt by his own self-denial in OD behaviour; the other toward whom he acts may be hurt in SD behaviour. In the case of BSD behaviour, neither person is hurt, and unless their goal achievement is mutally exclusive, both may succeed.

Examples

1. Mr. and Mrs. A are at dinner in a moderately expensive restaurant. Mr. A has ordered a rare steak, but when the steak is served, Mr. A finds it to be very well done, contrary to his order. His behaviour is:

Other-Determined (OD): Mr. A grumbles to his wife about the "burned" meat, and observes that he won't patronize this restaurant in the future. He says nothing to the waitress, responding "Fine!" to her inquiry "Is everything all right?". His dinner and evening are highly unsatisfactory, and he feels guilty for having taken no action. Mr. A's estimate of himself, and Mrs. A's estimate of him are both deflated by the experience.

Balanced Self-Determined (BSD): Mr. A motions the waitress to his table. Noting that he had ordered a rare steak, he shows her the well-done meat, asking politely but firmly that it be returned to the kitchen and replaced with the rare-cooked steak he originally requested. The waitress apologizes for the error, and shortly returns with a rare steak. The A's enjoy dinner, tip accordingly, and Mr. A feels satisfaction with himself. The waitress is pleased with a satisfied customer and an adequate tip.

Selfish-Determined (SD): Mr. A angrily summons the waitress to his table. He berates her loudly and unfairly for not complying with his order. His actions ridicule the waitress and embarrass Mrs. A. He demands and receives another steak, this one more to his liking. He feels in control of the situation, but Mrs. A's embarrassment creates friction between them, and spoils their evening. The waitress is humiliated and angry, and loses her poise for the rest of the evening.

2. Mr. and Mrs. B, who have been married nine years, have been having marital problems recently because he insists that she is overweight and needs to reduce. He brings the subject up continually, pointing out that she is no longer the girl he married (who was 25 pounds lighter), that such overweight is bad for her health, that she is a bad example for the children, and so on.

In addition, he teases her about being "chunky", looks longingly at thin girls, commenting how attractive they look, and makes references to her figure in front of their friends. Mr. B has been reacting this way for the past three months and Mrs. B is highly upset. She has been attempting to lose weight for those three months but with little success. Following Mr. B's most recent rash of criticism, Mrs. B is:

OD: She apologizes for her overweight, makes only feeble excuses or simply doesn't reply to some of Mr. B's comments. Internally, she feels alternately hostile toward her husband for his nagging, and guilty about being overweight. Her feelings of anxiety make it even more difficult for her to lose weight and the battle continues.

BSD: Approaching her husband when they are alone and will not be interrupted, Mrs. B indicates that she feels that Mr. B is correct about her need to lose weight, but she does not care for the way he keeps after her about the problem or the manner in which he does so. She points out that she is doing her best and is having a difficult time losing the weight and maintaining the loss. He acknowledges the ineffectiveness of his harping, and they work out together a plan in which he will systematically reward her for her efforts to lose weight.

SD: Mrs. B goes into a long tirade about how her husband isn't any great bargain any more either! She brings up the fact that at night he falls asleep on the couch half the time, is a lousy sex partner and doesn't pay sufficient attention. None of these comments are pertinent to the issue at hand, but Mrs. B continues. She complains that he humiliates her in front of the children and their close friends and acts like a "lecherous old man" by the way he eyes the sexy girls. In her anger she succeeds only in wounding Mr. B and driving a wedge between them by "defending" herself with a counter-attack on him.

3. Mr. and Mrs. E have a boy two years old and a baby girl two months old. Over the last several nights their neighbour's son, who is 17, has been sitting in his own driveway in his car with his stereo tape player blaring loudly. He begins just about the time the E's two young children go to bed. The loudness of his music has been awakening the children each night since their bedrooms are on the side of the house where the boy plays the music. It is impossible for the E's to get the children to bed until the music stops. Mr. and Mrs. E are both disturbed and decide to be:

OD: Mr. and Mrs. E move the children into their own bedroom on the other side of the house, wait until the music stops around 1 a.m., then transfer the children back to their own rooms. Then they go to bed much past their own usual bedtime. They continue to quietly curse the teenager and soon become alienated from their neighbours.

BSD: Both Mr. and Mrs. E go over to the boy's house and indicate to him that his stereo is keeping the children awake at night. They offer to work out an arrangement concerning the music so that it would not disturb the children's sleep. The boy is reluctantly agreeable to setting a lower volume level during the late hours, but appreciates the E's co-operative attitude. Both parties feel good about the outcome.

SD: Mr. and Mrs. E call the police and protest that "one of those wild teenagers" next door is creating a disturbance. They demand that the police "do their duty" and stop the noise at once. The police do talk with the boy and his parents, who become very upset and angry as a result of their embarrassment about the police visit. They denounce the E's tactic in reporting to the police without speaking to them first, and resolve to avoid further association with them.

4. Mark, 28, came home today to find a note from his wife saying that she has initiated divorce proceedings against him. He is emotionally upset by his wife's actions, especially since she did not tell him face to face. As he attempts to control himself and understand why she reacted this way, he re-reads her note: "Mark, we have been married for three whole years and you have never for one instant let me stand up for myself and act like a human being. You constantly tell me what to do and you make all of the decisions! You will never learn to show tenderness and warmth toward anyone. I dread having children for fear they will be treated as I am. I have learned to lose all respect and admiration for you. Last night was the final straw when you beat me, Mark, and I am divorcing you." Mark decides to react to her note by being:

OD: He feels all alone, sorry for himself and yet remorseful. He begins drinking and finally gets up enough nerve to call his wife at her parent's home. On the phone he pleads for her forgiveness, asking her to return, promising he will reform.

BSD: Mark phones his wife indicating that he realizes it is basically his fault, but that he would like to change. He tells of his plan to make an appointment with a marriage counsellor and is hopeful that she would attend with him.

SD: Mark becomes violently angry at his wife's behaviour and seeks her out. He roughly grabs her arm and demands that she come home where she belongs. He indicates that she is his wife and must do what he says. She struggles and resists and her parents intervene and call the police.

General and Situational Other-Determined Behaviour

Two concepts of OD are useful in the development of more adaptive responses to life situations which call for BSD behaviour. The first concerns those individuals whose behaviour is typically adequate and self-enhancing; however, certain situations stimulate a great deal of anxiety in them which prevents fully adequate responses to that particular situation. We identify this category as situational Other-Determinedness.

The second category, generalized Other-Determinedness, includes those persons whose behaviour is typically OD across situations. This individual, often observed as shy, timid, non-assertive, or reserved, finds himself unable to assert his rights or act on his feelings under most or nearly all circumstances. He will not do anything to disturb anyone. He is constantly giving in to any request made of him or feels guilty for turning someone down. He has always done what his parents wanted of him. He feels he has no ideas of his own and is cowed by others. Whereas most persons will at least protest a little when their rights are badly abused, the general OD person will say nothing at all. For example, if others are making undue noise and interfering with one's enjoyment of a performance, most of us will, when sufficiently provoked, ask them to respect our desire for quiet, whereas the generally OD person will suffer in silence. He may even accuse himself of being non-accepting or non-loving at having the slightest thought that the other person is wrong. It is not unusual for him to go out of his way to let others take advantage of him. Some general OD people ask permission to do what most regard as commonly accepted. One woman felt it necessary to ask her husband if she could kiss him or sit on his lap! One man let someone borrow his car, supposedly for the day. When, three days later, the person returned the car with little gas and no explanation whatsoever as to what had happened, the owner said nothing although his head was in a "fog" and his stomach in turmoil.

The generally OD person, therefore, is one who finds his own self-esteem very low, and for whom very uncomfortable anxiety is generated by nearly all social situations. His feelings of inadequacy, his lack of acknowledgement of his self-worth, and his physical discomfort brought on by generalized anxiety call for in-depth treatment. The extreme inhibition and lack of emotional responsiveness of this OD person may require a depth of attitude and behaviour development which is possible only in a relationship with a trained therapist.

The situational OD person will readily recognize his problem and, without too much preparation or prompting, will successfully initiate BSD behaviour. He also has a tendency to recognize ways in his life to become more BSD and assert himself with others spontaneously without being specifically instructed to do so by the coach. An example is a 27 year old female college student who told of how others took advantage of her a good deal of the time. Her present difficulty was with a classmate who had borrowed her notes some time ago and now had them for over a month. The girl needed them back in order to prepare for student teaching and had even asserted herself to some extent by asking for them back one time, but the other girl did not return them. The concepts of BSD were explained to her, the difficulty she had asserting herself properly pointed out to her, and she role-played calling the girl again, this time being firm and insistent. During the next several days she did call the girl, spoke firmly about needing her notes, and soon got them back. She also complained about an unjust parking ticket and won. In addition, she spoke up to one of her roommates about some matter that upset her. In the past, this woman would have let these things slide or pass; however, she learned her lesson quickly, with a much improved self-image as a result.

In the case of situational OD, we may assume we are dealing with a relatively healthy person who wishes to develop new ways of handling situations which are now uncomfortable, self-denying, and non-adaptive for him. If he did nothing about these situations he would still be able to function in a relatively healthy manner. However, by learning BSD behaviour in certain key situations he will make his life run more smoothly and feel much more fulfilled as a person. The teacher, counsellor, or friend may observe this person's inability to act in his own best interest. Or the individual may himself seek help in overcoming anxiety in a given situation.

General and Situational Selfish-Determined Behaviour

In the preceding section, we described the behaviour of the person whose anxiety inhibited Balanced Self-Determined responses. Another person may respond to such anxiety by becoming Selfishly-Determined and aggressive, "putting himself up" by "putting others down".

It is not uncommon for BSD behaviour to be confused with SD behaviour. However, BSD does not involve hurting another person. Often the SD individual wishes to stand up for himself without hurting others but has not learned responses which are appropriately self-determined. It is easy to misunderstand SD acts and to hold low esteem for SD people. Hopefully, an acknowledgement of SD behaviour as an inadequate response to anxiety and a recognition of the ease with which one may learn more adaptive responses will reduce the out-of-proportion concern many have about individual SD behaviour.

The concepts of "general" and "situational" may be applied to SD behaviour in a similar fashion to the discussion of OD behaviour. The generally Selfishly-Determined individual is characterized by behaviour toward others which is typically selfish and aggressive in every type of situation. He may appear, on the surface, to have a high level of self-confidence, to be in command of every situation, to be strong and able to cope with life on his own terms. He may live according to his view of the masculine cultural ideal: the image of the aggressive, masculine figure who dominates his environment and demonstrates his "manhood" by bravado. If he is more intellectually oriented, he may typically dominate conversations, belittle the opinions of others, and leave no doubt that he considers himself the final word on nearly any topic. One who is generally SD appears to have friction with the majority of people with whom he comes into contact. He is extremely sensitive to criticism and feels rejected a good portion of the time. General SD is characterized by the ease at which one is triggered into aggressive outbursts. In extreme cases he is so volatile that the slightest threat to his security causes an adverse reaction. He is typically very autocratic in his family relationships with a submissive spouse and cowering children and may be physically abusive with his spouse. Often a loner type who is considered sullen and moody, he may have great difficulty holding a job.

This generally SD person, because his behaviour is so offensive to others, finds himself with few friends and little esteem from his acquaintances. His need for affection and acceptance are as great as anyone's but he does not know how to assert himself (and thus gain acceptance) or how to ask for affection. His attempts at reaching out to others for human contact usually end in frustration because of his abusive behaviour.

Again, as in the case of the generally OD person, the generally SD individual is anxious in nearly all social situations. His unwillingness or inability to respond to an emotional event honestly, deceiving others and often himself,may call for a professional therapeutic relationship.

The situationally Selfishly-Determined person responds with aggression only under certain conditions. He will usually recognize this condition and may voluntarily seek assistance for the specific problem, or respond readily to the suggestion of another that he may need to change. He may respond willingly to the suggestion that he may easily learn a more adaptive response than SD behaviour. Two examples of situational SD aggressive behaviour will perhaps bring the idea into clearer perspective. Two individuals were referred for counselling by the same instructor on separate occasions. The first, a 20 year old male was described as having a "chip on his shoulder"; the second, a 24 year old female, was sent for "being too pushy" with an instructor and her classmates. The boy was a disrupting influence in the classroom for the teacher and other class members. He would ask questions in an aggressive manner which intimidated the teacher and in class discussions would barge in with his opinions, showing no respect for the opinions of others. His opinionated attitude was offending but made worse by his contempt for others who did not accept his "obvious" conclusions. He literally disrupted the entire classroom climate by rejecting the validity of any viewpoint other than his own. To say the least, he alienated everyone in this classroom situation even though many of his points were well thought out and logical.

The girl only became aggressive after an extended period of Other-Determined behaviour. As she felt others taking advantage of her more and more, she finally could stand it no longer and would have an aggressive outburst. After her display of anger, she would appear to function well again until the build-up occurred again, producing another outburst. Both of these individuals were correct in their opinions, but ruined the effectiveness of their ideas by inappropriate actions. Both found their academic lives improved by learning how to handle situations with Balanced Self-Determined behaviour.

Another example is that of a woman, 37, who was being counselled with her husband after having worked individually with a therapist for some time. She was extremely angry with her husband for his preoccupation with activities outside the home, but avoided direct confrontation. Instead, her responses to him were "super-sweet", including a direct statement that she "didn't mind" his involvements elsewhere. Nevertheless, she expressed her bitter resentment by such actions as taking the car when she knew he needed it, cutting him down verbally in front of others, and leaving the children with him when he was particularly busy at home. Such subtly aggressive acts were all a substitute for the honest confrontation she could not achieve.

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* Recommended for supplementary reading.

C. TOWARDS EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Among the principal functions of communication is its role in fostering understanding and cooperation between people. That is certainly what communication is intended to accomplish. Unfortunately that objective cannot easily be obtained by what we are accustomed to thinking of as communication.

Our approach to communication is based on first recognizing the main intervening forces which interfere with the effectiveness of communication, and then suggesting and illustrating skills and approaches which take into account and compensate for the distorting effects of those intervening forces. Let us examine some aspects of the problem.

Perception

A person's actions, thoughts and attitudes and how he chooses to communicate these things depend largely on his perception of himself and the world. There is in reality very little objectivity; the perceiver is never completely neutral, and he organizes perceptual stimuli into meaningful patterns so that they "fit" with his pre-existing patterns or "set" as it is sometimes called. The "set" is made up in part of expectations, personality, experience, age, physical factors, place, time and culture. Since these factors are never totally the same in any two people and are greatly varied in a group of people, each individual perceives events and situations uniquely and this is reflected in his communication.

Self and Self-Concept

The part of an individual that does the perceiving is the "I" or "me", the "self". The self is experienced as having needs, desires, emotions, intentions, expectations and obligations and manifests these in certain ways. We have, in addition, the self-concept, which deals more with what we believe about ourself than what is. Each person has a conception about himself as being a certain kind of person, characterized by traits, habits, abilities, skills, knowledge and ways of manifesting this self-concept in behaviour. These beliefs are influenced by our surroundings,

family, home, status, etc. and the information we receive as to how other people view us. The expectations of others and how they behave towards us can exert a powerful influence on our own self-concept.

The self-concept or self-image is how a person sees himself and wishes to be seen by others. The self-image mediates between the inner self and the world. Therein lies the basic conflict within each of us. There exists a stress between what we are and what we believe we are. This is a source of problems in communication. An incongruent person, one whose inner self differs markedly from his perceptions of it, knows this stress. Honest, accurate, communication can best occur when a person's verbal description of his inner state is reflected in his actions and non-verbal cues. This requires a sensitive awareness and acceptance of one's inner state. Only to the degree that this is accomplished can a person behave and communicate congruently.

Feelings and Emotion

Communication which involves the feelings of individuals is the most difficult of all. To communicate effectively in this area we must be sensitive to our feelings, and to how these feelings influence what we perceive and what we communicate. We must also recognize that the other individual is a person of feeling who has a self-image which must be maintained. His feelings influence what he perceives and communicates; his feelings may be different from ours, but they are authentic. We must respect them and his right to have them.

It is often difficult to express our own feelings accurately or to understand those of others. Expressions of emotions may take many different forms, such as bodily changes, actions and words. Also, any specific feeling may not always be expressed in the same way, and any specific expression of feeling may result from different emotions. Our perception of what another is feeling is influenced by the situational context, by non-verbal cues, by our expectations based on past experience, and by our present emotional state.

Distortion

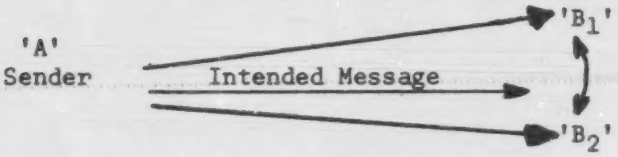
Various forces within a person have the effect of distorting the process of communication either in sending a message or in receiving it. Very often this distortion is present at both ends. Speaking as we do from differing experiential backgrounds, it is necessary to realize that words have different connotations and arouse differing responses in individuals. Each culture and subculture within society has some differences in frame of reference concerning what is desirable in life and how best to go about meeting one's goals.

Commonly communication is thought of as the sending of messages from one person to another.

'A' communicates what he intends to 'B'

Figure 1

In practise, communication is not that simple because we usually communicate a number of things at one time - tone of voice, choice of words, bodily gestures, the "set", and preceeding immediate experience may distort or even contradict the meaning of what we are attempting to say. The process of communication is more factually represented in Figure 2.



'A' communicates more than he intends to 'B'

Figure 2

The receiver may compound the distortion because of any one of the factors mentioned earlier. A major source of receiver distortion is ineffective "attending behaviours". These skills will be discussed in the next section.

Having presented an overview of some of the forces which interfere with effective communication, we can now turn to some principles and techniques which, if carefully applied, result in greatly improved effectiveness of interpersonal communication.

Improving the Effectiveness of Communication: The Attending Behaviours

An important aspect of establishing a relationship with an individual is being aware of, and responsive to, the communications of the other, and communicating this attentiveness. The communication of attentiveness is essential in the initial establishment of a relationship, and throughout acts as a reinforcer of the interaction. Good attending behaviours are essential to group discussion.

There are four central aspects of attending behaviour which involve both verbal and non-verbal components:

1. Body movement includes the postural positions, movements and gestures, that together communicate attentiveness.

2. Eye contact involves looking at the person with whom you are talking or at the person who is speaking. This is not meant to be eyeball to eyeball staring. Your purpose is to let the other know you are attending and to make it easy for him to talk.

3. In verbal and non-verbal following you reflect back or paraphrase both the content and the expressed or implied feelings which the speaker communicates to you. This lets the speaker know you are attending and permits him to correct misimpressions as they occur.

4. In the I-Thou relationship you periodically focus the dialogue on the here-and-now interaction between the two of you as it is separately perceived and felt. This has the effect of moving people into a meaningful inter-personal encounter in which ideas and feelings can be expressed freely.

The attending behaviours as skills of direct mutual communication help individuals share their immediate experience of each other.

An example of this sharing is, "I seem always to lack self-confidence". The listener responds with his own reaction to this disclosure, "It's great that you feel free enough to share that with me, and I feel closer to you because of it". A non-sharing reaction would be, "You shouldn't feel that way " or "Lots of people feel that way."

The verbal components of following are reflection of feeling and summarization of feeling and content.

The specific skill of accurate reflection of feeling plays an important part in communicating to the individual that "I am with you...I can accurately sense your experience of the world". It communicates empathic understanding, non-possessive warmth and genuineness, and is a key aspect of an effective interpersonal relationship. The skill of reflection of feeling represents a focused attending in which the individual selectively attends to certain aspects of the one-to-one interaction.

The skill of accurate summarization of feeling and content involves attending to the individual, sensing the feelings and messages expressed, and integrating the many responses of the person. Periodic summarizations communicate that "I understand what you say and can sense the world as you feel and perceive it". This is the skill of bringing together seemingly diverse elements into a meaningful Gestalt.

Attending behaviour, reflection of feeling and summarization of feeling and content are different classes of reinforcers. Attending behaviour is simply "being with" the person, both physically and verbally, and thus reinforcing him for being himself. Reflection of feeling is selectively attending to the feeling or emotional aspects of the person's comments, thus reinforcing only certain aspects of his behaviour. Summarization of feeling and content involves the first two dimensions, but also requires the ability to integrate and find common elements in diverse responses. As such it probably represents one of the most complex and important skills of the Life Skills coach. (This concept will be further developed in Unit V on Structured Human Relations Training.)

Confidence and Trust

Meaningful communication and improved understanding in group interactions can be accomplished through the creation of an atmosphere of mutual confidence and trust. This is usually a slow process of growth. We trust when we are accepted as we are; one is trusted when one accepts others as they are. Fear of retaliation, reproach, criticism or condemnation are, inevitably, barriers to confidence and communication.

Trust begins within ourselves. We endeavour as the sender of communication to accept the other person and to build security within him so he will feel comfortable with himself and free to accept and communicate his feelings. As the receiver of communication, we must learn to listen from the sender's point of view, rather than evaluating from our point of view. Too much must not be expected at once. Many person have spent years in becoming distrustful of others; such feelings are not overcome quickly.

We can assist this process of establishing confidence and trust if we learn to describe our own feelings clearly and accurately. This can be done by identifying our feelings specifically by name, action-urge, simile or other figure of speech, and referring to "I", "me" or "my". Such identification gives the person to whom we are speaking a chance to understand our exact feelings and may give him confidence to reveal his own.

Listening for and responding to the feelings conveyed by the other person helps him to express his central concerns. Because emotional states express themselves in many ways, an individual may convey contradictory messages about his feelings. As the listener, we must check our perception of his messages to understand his feelings. A perception check, in which the speaker's expression of feeling is tentatively described by the listener, does not express either approval or disapproval, and contributes to the growth of mutual understanding and confidence.

Behaviour Description and Feedback

Behaviour description is the reporting of specific, observable actions without placing a value on them as right or wrong, good or bad, and without

making accusations or generalizations about motives, attitudes or personality traits. We try to let the other know the behaviour to which we respond by describing the visible evidence clearly and specifically. This involves sharpening our observations, paying attention to the observable, and holding inferences in abeyance.

Feedback is communication which gives back to an individual information about how his previously described behaviour has affected us, and where he stands with us in relation to his goals and intentions. If two individuals are to discuss the way they work together and what is happening in their relationship, both must talk about what each does that affects the other.

Expressions of feeling and descriptions of observable behaviour in communication between two individuals, clearly stated and understood by both parties, help the feedback process. Feedback becomes easier as trust and confidence develop. Feedback can be given skillfully only when the sender is really interested in and accepts the other person. Feedback can be accepted and used only when the receiver is comfortable enough with himself and the sender to sense the acceptance and examine himself non-defensively. This understanding is basic to giving constructive feedback and essential to effective communication.

Through experience, each individual learns to select, interpret and change his beliefs, attitudes, opinions and behaviours to fit his own personal viewpoint. Because no two people have the same viewpoint, misunderstanding and conflict arise. It is important that we learn to test how we see reality against how others see it, that we learn to determine if our attitudes and behaviours are effective and appropriate, and that we learn to develop awareness and openness to experience.

Feedback helps a person to understand how others react to his behaviour. Effective feedback rests on the ability of members to level and be open in the group.

Feedback makes possible levelling. Levelling in the group is saying what you think or feel about the actions or communications of another in immediate response to some occurrence. If given and taken in the proper way and at the right time, levelling can clear the air between people and help them to build a more solid and honest relationship by lessening fear, suspicion and distrust. It provides the basis for trying other behaviours

that might be helpful or necessary in analyzing or understanding a problem. Levelling works both ways; we must help others learn to level with us by giving them support when they try to level.

Rarely do two persons talk openly about their reactions to each other's actions. Most of us withhold our feelings about the other; because we do not know how to be constructively open, we say nothing. The other receives ambiguous and incomplete information of our reaction to his actions through non-verbal communication. In the absence of feedback, we have to rely on non-verbal cues to learn the effect our actions produce. The things that most of us really do not want to hear about ourselves are the very things we should hear. We fail to be open and give feedback because we do not wish to deal with the unpleasant situation it might create.

Responsible feedback is not given to hurt or put down the other person; rather it is given out of genuine concern. Feedback can be positive, negative or even neutral. Most feedback is a negative reaction to something the other person says or does. Positive feedback can be difficult to learn to give and receive. Yet it is important if one is to learn which behaviours to maintain and reinforce. When feedback is given in a group setting, both the giver and the receiver have an opportunity to check its accuracy with others.

Feedback takes into account the needs of both the giver and the receiver; it is never forced on a person, and can be destructive if it serves only one person's needs. It is in receiving feedback that countering, or attempting to ward off the feedback, can be seen in its clearest form. Most people are searching for a defense at the same time that feedback information is presented to them. Countering is significant because it reveals the inner dialogue that the recipient of the feedback tends to maintain with himself. The appropriate self-searching attitude which might profitably accompany feedback by no means calls for ready acceptance, but rather for considering the feedback for its relevance. When this attitude is manifest, there is an actual, apparent physical strain as the recipient searches himself. Rejecting feedback acts to stimulate other possibilities within, not to bring relief for being let off the hook.

Putting into practice the following points will increase the probability that levelling, openness and feedback will improve a relationship rather than harm it:

1. Try to convey that you value your relationship with the other, and that you seek a sharing of reactions through openness and feedback because you wish to improve this relationship.

2. Aim at creating a shared understanding of your relationship. Each of you will then view the relationship from more nearly the same viewpoint, and be able to see each other's viewpoint more clearly.

3. Recognize that openness and feedback involve risk-taking. You must be willing to risk being yourself, and the other person being himself, in order to make the encounter a learning situation for both of you.

4. Do not attempt to use feedback to coerce the other to change. Any change in behaviour which results should be self-chosen, not an attempt to placate or submit to the other.

5. Share your reactions as close to the behaviour that aroused them as possible. Disturbing situations especially should be discussed as they occur.

6. Paraphrase the other's comments about you to make sure you understand them as he intends them. Likewise, check to make sure the other understands your comments about him in the way you intend them.

7. Direct the feedback only toward behaviour about which the receiver can do something. The other person is only more baffled and frustrated when he is reminded of some shortcoming over which he has no control.

In giving and receiving feedback, statements are more helpful if they are:

a. specific rather than general.
"You bumped my cup" rather than "You never watch where you're going".

b. tentative rather than evaluative.
"You cut Joe off" rather than "You always cut Joe off" or "You have to dominate all the time".

c. informing rather than ordering.
"I hadn't finished yet" rather than "Stop interrupting me!".

The most helpful kinds of information are:

a. behaviour description: reporting specific acts of the other that affect you. "You cut in before I had finished my sentence."

b. descriptions of your own feelings: "I like what you just said."

c. perception-checking responses: "I thought you weren't interested in trying to understand my idea."

The least helpful kinds of statements are:

a. generalizations: "You never pay any attention."

b. name-calling, trait labelling: "You're too rude."

c. accusations, imputing undesirable motives: "You enjoy putting people down." "You always have to be in the center of attention."

d. demands, orders: "Don't talk so much." "Stop laughing."

It is necessary to practice in order to learn how and when to level naturally, talk openly, and give and receive feedback responsibly. The group setting provides an opportunity to practice in an atmosphere of experimentation and support.

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D. HELPFUL AND HARMFUL GROUP BEHAVIOURS

The members of an efficient and productive group must provide for meeting two kinds of needs - what it takes to do the job, and what it takes to strengthen and maintain the group. Members' behaviours and statements may be viewed in terms of how they serve the needs of the group, rather than at the level of content and behaviour alone.

Statements and behaviours which serve group needs, strengthen group interaction and help in the development of problem-solving skills are helpful behaviours. Such behaviours foster our understanding and acceptance of ourselves and others. They help us to perceive how our behaviours affect others, and how we might achieve a more desirable effect on others.

There is usually no borderline between different helpful behaviours. In discussion, they often occur simultaneously, and any contribution may come within the definition of several behaviours, depending on the circumstances.

Helpful behaviours are classified according to their main purpose or effect; task roles are behaviours required in selecting and carrying out a group task; maintenance roles are behaviours required in strengthening and maintaining group life and activities; other behaviours contain elements of both risk and maintenance roles. These classifications are adopted mainly for convenience in talking about behaviours. They should not be taken too seriously; the important question is whether the behaviour is helpful.

Helpful Task Behaviours

1. Initiating activity: proposing solutions; suggesting new ideas; suggesting a new definition of the problem, a new organization of material, or a new attack on the problem.

   "I think the problem is that John didn't read what he was signing."

   'Mary might see if her mother would look after the baby for a few weeks."

2. Seeking information: asking for clarification of suggestions, requesting additional facts or information.

   "I wonder if there are any statistics or reports available on this subject. Perhaps we should find out."

   "Would you please explain to me, Larry, what services the _____ agency you suggested has to offer?"

3. Seeking opinion: looking for an expression of feeling about something from the members; seeking clarification of values, suggestions or ideas.

   "Do you feel right about listing this as one of our possible solutions?"

   "But, honestly, what's the difference between 'fibbing' and 'lying'?"

4. Giving information: offering relevant facts or generalizations; relating your own experience to the group problem to illustrate points.

   "It's the insured person's responsibility to see that his premiums are paid - the insurance company only reminds him."

   "There was something in the paper about that last week. It said..."

   "Once when I had a similar problem I tried that, and ..."

5. Giving opinion: stating your opinion or belief concerning a suggestion or an idea, particularly concerning its value rather than its factual basis.

   "I think it would be better for George and Phyllis to wait until they can pay cash for a new chair."

   "I think that looking pleased when her husband does come straight home would be better than bawling him out every time he stopped at the beer parlour."

"I agree that this would be better."

6. Elaborating: clarifying, giving examples or developing meanings; trying to envisage how a proposal might work if adopted.

"I like Betty's suggestion that Jean could rent the spare room. If she could rent it to a girl, perhaps the girl would be available for babysitting the nights when Jean has to go to class."

"I said a moment ago that I felt the most important problem to solve here is ..., because ... I might add that this would have the further advantage of ..."

"An example of that would be the case where ...."

"Were you thinking, Mary, that if Stephen were to force his son to apologize, this might make the boy all the more resentful?"

7. Co-ordination: showing relationships between various ideas or suggestions; pulling ideas and suggestions together; drawing together the activities of various subgroups or members.

"Perhaps John's suggestion for getting Frank's co-operation would be just as good as the other way, because both suggestions involve ..."

"We've been discussing Rosa's situation, John. She tells us ..., we've been trying to decide what the problem is and we have come up with these ideas ...."

8. Summarizing: pulling together related ideas or suggestions; restating suggestions after group discussion.

"Let's see: we've said Gerry felt that his wife was staying away from the house too much, that the children weren't being looked after. He wanted to talk to her about it, but he was afraid she might get angry if he did. Maybe we could go back to that point and think of some ways he might go about it."

"Well, we've got two possible solutions, but don't you feel there must be some more alternatives?"

Helpful Maintenance Behaviours

Supporting

1. Encouraging: being friendly, warm, responsive to others; praising others and their ideas; agreeing with and accepting contributions from others.

   "I think that's a good point."

   "I agree."

   "You were talking about that last week, Bill. Maybe your experience would help us at this point."

   "That's interesting, Phyllis. Did you actually try out that idea? How did it work?"

   "You seem doubtful about this idea, Paul. I'd like to hear what you think about it."

2. Gatekeeping: trying to make it possible for another member to make a contribution to the group by calling on that person to speak, or suggesting limited talking time for everyone so that all will have a chance to be heard.

   "I think Jim would like to say something on this."

   "Just a minute, Roger, I think some of the others would like to comment on this point."

   "What do you think about this, Tom?"

   "I'd like to hear some other views on this."

   "I'd like to hear Marge finish developing her idea" (when Marge has been interrupted).

3. Standard-setting: expressing standards for the group to use in choosing its content or procedures, or in evaluating its decisions; reminding the group to avoid decisions which conflict with group standards.

> "Is this topic really appropriate to our training group? Maybe we should decide about this."
>
> "We keep waiting around for late arrivals. Let's discuss this situation and come to some agreement about starting on time or waiting for people."

4. Following: going along with the decisions of the group; thoughtfully accepting the ideas of others; serving as an audience during group skills practice sessions.

> "Well I'm not much interested in going bowling - but then I've never bowled much, so I'll go along with that since most of you want to go."

5. Expressing group feeling: summarizing what the group feeling is sensed to be; describing reactions of the group to ideas or solutions.

> "It seems to me that everyone feels right about listing this as one of our possible solutions."
>
> "I think we're all a bit disturbed at the thought of ..."
>
> "I seem to hear people saying they have no serious objection to this on moral grounds, but that it wouldn't make a very effective solution - that several of the other ideas are probably better."
>
> "I seem to sense more hesitation in the group. We're saying 'Yes, it's O.K.' but we don't sound very certain about it. Let's hear the doubts if we have some."

Helpful Task and Maintenance Roles

1. Evaluating: submitting group decisions or accomplishments to comparison with group standards; measuring accomplishments against goals.

"Let's stop and think about that for a minute. Are we really sure about our facts?"

"I think we've really been trying to solve two problems - the one we stated at the beginning and this one. If both must be solved together, I think we should go back and state both of them and their relationship. If not, let's confine our discussion to the first one we stated."

2. Diagnosing: determining sources of difficulty and appropriate steps to take next; analyzing the main blocks to progress.

"We seem to be rushing at this to get a decision before lunch time. Let's agree to resume the discussion later if necessary."

"You know, I've just noticed that every time Mary makes a suggestion, we all seem to attack it."

3. Testing for consensus: tentatively asking for group opinions in order to determine whether the group is nearing consensus on a decision; sending up "trial balloons" to test group opinions.

"Are we ready to accept solution C? ...(Chorus of "yes".) ... What about you, John? ... and Esther? ... (They didn't say 'yes' with the chorus.) Does anyone disagree? ..."

"Are we ready to leave this now and go on to the next idea? Are you ready, Arthur? ... Mary? ... Richard? ... Jim? ... etc." naming each member until all have been asked or one has reopened the discussion.

4. Mediating: harmonizing, conciliating differences in points of view; making compromise solutions.

"If this plan is not fully acceptable to everyone, how about changing it to ...?"

"I don't feel so strongly against the idea in general; I would go along with it if we could just find some way to avoid ..."

"It seems to me that both Mary and Wilf really want to see the misunderstanding between the two branches of the family cleared up - the only disagreement is on how to do it. Perhaps we can think of some way that will be acceptable to everyone ..."

5. Relieving tension: draining off negative feeling by jesting or pouring oil on troubled waters; putting a tense situation in wider context.

"Let's not all speak at once." (When a long silence and worried frowns indicate that people are reticent about being first to speak.)

"Of course, we don't really have to agree with each other, do we? We're still in the discussion stage. Let's hear what someone else has to say!" (When a heated disagreement over some detail is blocking progress in the early stages of a discussion.)

"I think it's natural that Joe and Arnie would have different points of view, and I'm sure we have all learned a great deal by listening to both of them. I wonder what some of the rest of us think about this point?" (When different backgrounds, philosophies, etc. have clashed, and nothing is to be gained by contention.)

"I think we're all getting tired - let's take our coffee break now." (When discussion is becoming listless or short-tempered.)

Harmful Behaviours

Harmful behaviours can hinder group members in the progress of their problem-solving and personal development; they tend to make the group as a whole inefficient or weak.

1. Being aggressive: working for status by criticizing or blaming others; showing hostility against the group or some individual; deflating the ego or status of others.

Hostility in group interaction is often caused by impatience with a long discussion, intolerance for viewpoints other than one's own or just plain anger. In other cases, an impression of hostility appears in facial expression or gesture, of which the person is unaware and does not really feel.

To avoid: Feedback is the best clue for the person who is giving an impression of hostility. For the person who is hostile, the best advice is to take relevant feedback to heart, and consciously try to find something to like and admire in every other member of the group.

To counteract: Give feedback related to the person's hostile act or statement. (Let him ask if he 'always' does it.)

The unnecessary deflating of another person's ego is sometimes done through clumsiness (unfortunate words that are difficult to unsay), and sometimes deliberately (to 'do him good', or to win at the game of one-up-manship).

To avoid: Before undertaking to deflate someone 'because he needs it', consider these questions: "How damaging will this be to him?" "Is my judgement being affected by any personal desire to see him pulled down a bit?" "Could I help him just as much in some less humiliating way?"

To counteract: If someone deflates you (unnecessarily, in your opinion) tell him how you feel about it. If someone deflates another group member, you might come to that person's rescue by expressing your disagreement, or by rephrasing the speech in a less deflating manner.

2. Blocking: interfering with the progress of the group by going off on a tangent; citing personal or non-group oriented experiences, feelings or points of view that are unrelated to the problem; rejecting ideas without consideration; arguing too much on a point.

To avoid: Watch to see if others appear interested in what you are saying. If not, ask yourself "Are they failing to listen or am I side-tracking." Act accordingly:

either stop talking or finish your speech as briefly as you can and request some response to what you have said. As to defending your ideas too strongly while rejecting the ideas of others, try asking yourself these questions: "Am I providing reasons for my ideas?" "Are the opposition giving reasons for their point of view?" "Are their reasons sensible?"

To counteract: If someone else gets carried away with blocking behaviour, remember he'll have to pause for breath, and he's likely to do this at the end of a sentence. This is your opportunity to stop him: "I'd like to get back to the subject of ...".

3. Competing: vying with others to produce the best idea, talk the most, or play the most roles; trying to gain favour with the group leader.

To avoid: This type of behaviour is likely to stimulate feedback; if you get carried away, someone will probably tell you about it.

To counteract: Try "I'd like to hear some of the other ideas developed more fully", or if you have a strong opposing view of your own, insist on an opportunity to express it.

4. Seeking sympathy: trying to induce group members to be sympathetic to problems or misfortunes; deploring one's own situation; disparaging one's own ideas to gain support.

To avoid: Before you share one of your own problems for group discussion, ask yourself these questions: "Do I really want a solution?" "If a solution is suggested by the group, will I be willing to put it into effect or tell the group frankly why I can't use it?" "If some of my own mistakes are pointed out to me, can I take this in an objective way?" "Is the problem suitable for sharing with others?"

To counteract: If you sense that the narrator is looking for sympathy, you might ask "If all of us together can come up with a reasonable solution, will you try it?" This may influence the narrator to become more solution oriented.

5. Special pleading: introducing or supporting suggestions related to one's own pet concerns or philosophies; lobbying. This is usually an attempt to use the group as an audience for matters it cannot hope to deal with.

   To avoid: Group members can avoid this pitfall by keeping to the subject of the discussion.

   To counteract: If someone gets carried away in this direction, refocus the discussion by pointing out that the discussion has wandered.

6. Horsing around: clowning, joking, mimicking, disrupting the life of the group. These behaviours are unrelated to any need for relieving tension, and may be a signal that the subject is not of general interest, or that the group members are becoming tired.

   To avoid: An occasional bit of humour is welcome and is often helpful. But if you find yourself continually trying for laughs, you may be clowning. All you need to do is stop it.

   To counteract: Just don't laugh, or say "Let's get down to business again."

7. Seeking recognition: attempting to call attention to one's self by loud or excessive talking, extreme ideas or unusual behaviour.

   To avoid: Give serious consideration to any feedback you received regarding this behaviour. Form the habit of thinking back over your performance, and ask yourself these questions: "Did I concentrate on being effective or appearing effective?"; "Did I tear someone else down in order to build myself up?"; "Did I say something insincere, purely for the purpose of placing myself in a stronger position with the group or with a specific member?".

   To counteract: If you perceive that someone is playing the one-up-manship game, you may offer him feedback. "You just made everyone laugh at John. I wonder why you did

that? Was it to put him at a disadvantage in comparison with yourself?" A group member may engage in side-tracking in order to tell some story that shows him in a good light. You may choose to counteract this indirectly by bringing the group back to the subject or, directly, by suggesting that the speaker is really trying to impress the group. The choice between the direct and indirect methods may be made on the basis of how long the group has been working together, how often the offender has been telling such personal stories, and how much the offender needs to have his self-regard bolstered.

8. Withdrawal: acting indifferent or passive; resorting to excessive formality; daydreaming, doodling, whispering to others; wandering from the subject.

To avoid: Ask yourself "Has this discussion lost all value, or is the problem just me?". If you can honestly blame the discussion, and other people seem as bored as you are, try saying "Is this discussion really worthwhile? Are we getting anywhere with it, or getting anything out of it?". If you can't blame the discussion, if the others appear interested, if the contributions are relevant to the problem, and if you aren't sick or exhausted, then the best cure for boredom is to get into the discussion and start contributing.

To counteract: Ask the person who has withdrawn from his opinion, or try in any way to draw him into the discussion. If someone who normally participates is sulking, you might leave him alone - he won't be able to stand it for long.

9. Assuming that the problem is clear.

To avoid: Ask yourself if you could explain the problem to an "outsider".

To counteract: Listen carefully to the discussion. If you sense that another member's contribution springs from some different understanding of the problem or idea under discussion, try to find out what he is talking about.

10. Assuming that the problem is not important.

> To avoid: If the problem seems unimportant to you, listen carefully to find out what importance it has for other members of the group. If you are still unable to see any importance to it, you might ask: "Is this really a serious problem? Does it happen to people or cause them much difficulty?". The responses will either put you on the track, or reveal that others, too, doubt the importance of the problem.

In using such a classification, we need to guard against the tendency to blame any person, ourselves included, who falls into non-functional harmful behaviours. It is more useful to regard such behaviour as a symptom that all is not well with the group's ability to satisfy individual needs through group-centered activity. We need to be alert to the fact that each person is likely to interpret such behaviours differently. What appears to be harmful behaviour may not necessarily be so, for the content and the group conditions must also be taken into account. At times, aggressive behaviour contributes positively by clearing the air and instilling energy into the group.

The development and maintenance of the effectively functioning task-oriented group depends on the continued presence of helpful behaviours. Group members must understand the dynamics of both helpful and harmful behaviours; they must make certain that the helpful behaviours are present during all group interactions, and that harmful behaviours are promptly dealt with by the group.

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E. A COMPARISON OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN TRAINING GROUPS

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Maturation, a concept in developmental psychology describes the process which transforms the infant to an adult. Widely experienced and easily understood, maturation explains the unfolding of life. We have convincing evidence that our rate of learning and acculturation is somewhat fixed and is locked with the passage of time. No outside influence will hasten it. Teaching an infant of one year to dress himself is futile. At the age of three or four he will learn by himself.

This process appears to be analogous to the development of groups. While human beings go through major phases of development we call infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood and adulthood, remarkably parallel patterns occur in the development of groups.

People experiencing training groups more than once are often struck by the similarity of the events and stages which groups undergo. This is a simplified description of that process. It uses human development as an explanatory model to assist in describing group development.

Framework for Analysis

Five characteristics will comprise the framework for this analysis:

1. Intellectual. From the moment of beginning in the Group to the final handshake, people are expressing ideas. What subjects these ideas focus on is relevant to the Group's "growing up".

2. Emotional. Ideas seldom get expressed without some emotion being sent by the communicator or generated by those hearing the message. Just as emotional growth is important to the growing child, emotional maturity is a key element in Group growth.

3. Interaction of Intellectual and Emotional Dimensions. Developmental psychologists know that children's progress in academic subjects at school is tied to emotional development. So it is with Groups. The interaction of intellectual and emotional dimensions is a major determinant of progress.

4. Communication Model. "Communication model" here refers to the direction of information between parties and the usual behaviour and state of mind of the receiver and sender.

5. Representative Behaviour. We can think of representative behaviour of an infant, child, adolescent, or adult. As Groups mature there appears to be a similarly recognizable evolution of behaviour.

Stages of Development

Infancy

The infant is totally dependent on others. He has minimal intellectual capacity resulting from his limited maturation and poverty of experience. The infant relies solely on adults to meet his needs.

The Group, at its beginning stage, is dependent on the trainer. Trainer declarations that, "This is your group", fall on deaf ears.

Intellectual. The intellectual concerns of members in a Group begins with, "What is this?". There is virtually no cognitive understanding of the Group development process due to the uniqueness of the experience.

Emotional. The emotional dimension at this early stage is related to immediate and lower level needs for safety and security. Individual behaviour is centered almost exclusively on the protection of the self, because the self is being threatened. Infant-like behaviour is the result. Left to their own devices, there is little venturing forth. Someone in the Group may suggest introductions - "Tell us your name and where you work." The Group eagerly pursues this wonderfully safe exercise because it can do nothing to threaten or alter self images. Each individual can describe himself as he chooses, and he usually chooses to do so at the most superficial level.

Interaction of Intellectual and Emotional. The relationship between intellectual and emotional dimensions at this moment is a conflicting one. To pursue the question of "What is this?" requires serious exploration, which would destroy some of the individual's safety and comfort. The agitation and discomfort experienced in the early stage of Groups stem from this disparity between emotional and intellectual demands.

Communication Model. The Group is an experiment in communication. Marked differences exist in the communication model of the infant versus the communication model of later stages of development. The infant is talked to, not with. Infants do not respond to cognitive ideas, but are responsive only to their own viscera and to emotions coming from others.

Trainers in Groups have made frequent comment regarding the futility of making explanatory speeches at the beginning of the laboratory. Few individuals appear to recall, let alone comprehend, those early messages. Groups do, however, respond to his warmth, caring or hostility. Emotions triggered from these outside stimuli and internal feelings are powerful and often override the cognitive dimension.

Representative Behaviour. The initial groping for meaning, and immobility of behaviour in Groups is analogous to infant behaviour. The outside observer wonders how long adults can wallow in this new situation. How long can they engage in small talk? How long can they continue to evade each other? Like infants snugly tucked in cribs, the members of the Group make no bold statements or vigorous actions, and express only angry emotions.

Childhood

The child begins to perceive the reality about him. While the world of make believe and reality exist side by side for him, reality comes to be increasingly more important. The child explores his environment. He seeks to control, order and master w is around him.

The Group in similar fashion begins to perceive the reality of its new situation. The members of this Group are going to be together in this room for days. Slowly the realization comes that the trainer is not going to tell them what to do. This new environment will have to be explored, ordered and mastered by themselves.

Intellectual. The intellectual concerns at this moment are to make some sense out of nonsense. One person suggests, "Let's get organized." "How about getting a moderator or leader, because our fearless trainer isn't going to do anything." "Let's develop some goals." While the topic of goals is raised, there is little serious grappling with such a heady intellectual concern. At best, a list of discussion topics is made.

Emotional. The emotional concerns are fundamentally an extension of needs for safety and security. The change that occurs is one of being less fearful of being hurt to concerns of "maintaining my comfort". It is as if the child were saying, "I don't think this will hurt me, but I want to leave unless I get some rewards."

Interaction of Intellectual and Emotional. It is at this stage that progress begins to occur. The emotional and intellectual dimensions begin to support each other. A chairman is nominated. A discussion on racial relations occurs. Needs for inter-dependency begin to be met by participants leaning on one another, instead of the trainer. The organization and topics provide a vehicle for exploring this new situation.

Communication Model. The receivers begin to respond to the adult sender in childhood. Some response is "no", and if not totally suppressed by an adult, the child begins to develop greater independence and to chart his own course in life. Communication between children becomes clearer and more satisfying.

The Group begins to experience sharper and more satisfactory communication between its members. The participants also begin to send meaningful messages to the trainer. The trainer's comments can generate genuine response and are understood by many.

Behaviour Trends. The authority of the trainer is still completely accepted, in the same way the policeman or teacher is accepted by a child. There are moments in which these authorities are ignored. Jokes may be made about them. Deep down, however, there is the feeling that the trainer really will rescue the Group and that he is merely waiting for the right moment.

As children grow up to take the helm of their own lives, so Groups take over the direction of their affairs. Of their own volition, Group members discover how unsatisfactory it is to have a chairman monitor every discussion, when the only purpose for that chairman is to absolve others of responsibility. Just as the child learns that there is little satisfaction in having parents make every decision, so the Group comes to desire and even relish freedom.

Time spent at this stage of development is extremely valuable. Much data about other individuals is unknowingly being gathered. The developmental psychologist has concluded that in the animal kingdom, the more prolonged the infancy and childhood, the higher the ultimate level of achievement. Time spent in these stages of Group growth can also be valuable, so long as the Group is able to, and has the time to move onward.

The drive toward growth pushes the child and the Group on toward the most trying phase in human and group development.

Adolescence

The period of adolescence has received wide attention, even in daily newspapers, as it describes antisocial behaviour so typical of this stage of growth. Most adults can look back on adolescence as a time of distressing inner turmoil and conflict.

Intellectual. Adolescent intellectual concerns are ego centered. "What can I get out of life?", is a common adolescent attitude. However, the adolescent is later asking, "What is life really all about?". The latter concern is indicative of a deeper desire to find some meaning in existence. Intellectual ability to accumulate cognitive information is within the adolescent but such deeper intellectual concerns are often blocked by the emotional turbulence of the period.

Emotional. The emotions of the adolescent are strongly influenced by desires for belonging and acceptance. Yet, the adolescent is rebellious to any who would restrain him. Emotions get expressed in a volatile manner, including peaks of elation and chasms of despair. The adolescent is acutely sensitive to disapproval from his peers. Particularly irritating are signs that other adults might not perceive him as being fully grown up. Rebellion against dependency and autonomy creates feelings of frustration and anxiety.

These same emotions occur in the Group. Hostility gets directed toward the trainer. Anger and frustration magnify the negative, symbolic of adolescence. Relationships within the Group are often in the form of small cliques and pairs, much like the adolescent. Feelings of distrust exist toward those not in the clique, to outsiders, and often to the trainer. Powerful feelings of alienation and inferiority come over many members of the Group. This is the emotional low point of the Group.

Interaction Between Cognitive and Emotional. The emotional and cognitive dimensions of the group are once again in conflict. Everyone in a Group seeing what he can take from the experience leaves no one to give. Strong emotional desires for belonging and acceptance runs headlong into attempts to "get something out of it", in an intellectual way. Strong emotional feelings of rebellion and frustration lead to internal squabbles which further prevent acceptance and belonging. Desires to understand the Group process with the trainer's help get thwarted by rebelliousness towards those responsible for getting us in such a mess.

Internal feelings of uncomfortableness cannot be easily expressed at the adolescent level of Group development. Individuals in the Group are required to maintain an outer veneer of composure and tranquility, while their innards are churning.

Communication Model. Until this point in the adolescent's life, he has been receiving instruction. While authority may have been tested by being sassy, the adolescent is partially dependent. While adults are still teaching him, the adolescent now begins to develop independent response and personal viewpoint.

Representative Behaviour. As earlier noted, rebelliousness is a typical pattern of behaviour. It often gets expressed in comments to the trainer like, "How do you get a job like yours, just sitting there?". Arguments are often followed by periods of silence. Attempts by Group members to strongly influence the Group are rejected. Trainer interventions are ignored and the Group often plans its own activity. Then someone may turn to the trainer and say, "Why didn't you stop us - you knew that wasn't going to work?".

If emotions of Groups were to be plotted, the mid-laboratory slump is representative of adolescent periods. People are miserable, but do not know how to extricate themselves from their misery. Many ideas expressed have negative emotions associated with them. A minimum of positive emotion is expressed. False fronts are maintained by most in the Group. Some members express, "This is a waste of time."

Young Adulthood

Trainers often speak of Groups experiencing a "breakthrough" during their process. Some event in the Group catalyzes the previous collection of self-seeking individuals into a system that is organized toward helping each other in the Group to grow. It often occurs when some one individual steps from behind his shell and reveals his true identity, including his own feelings of insecurity, his honest feelings about others in the room, and often his positive regard for certain individuals. The event of becoming a more genuine person, of being authentic, is somewhat symbolic of stepping from adolescence into young adulthood.

Intellectual. The intellectual concerns in the Group shifts toward the notion that, "I may be able to learn something valuable about myself and others from this Group.". The discussion of goals and objectives for the Group is approached at a far deeper, more serious fashion than merely making a list on the blackboard. Ideas get treated earnestly.

Emotional. There comes a growing awareness of one's own feelings, including feelings of inadequacy, love and anger. Such feelings are now permissible. Feelings of warmth and intimacy between people are acceptable, even prized. The satisfaction of coming to know and understand others is widely shared. Participants begin to treat one another with heightened respect. People listen and reflect back on the meaning of early comments in relation to their current knowledge of each other. The Group begins to see how information about an individual can be pieced together, like odd-shaped pieces of a jig-saw puzzle into a consistent picture of how one human being thinks and feels. While the adolescent often holds himself in reserve, aloof from deep commitment, the young adult sees nothing wrong in expressing deep commitment to something seen as worthwhile.

Interaction of Emotional and Intellectual. The emotional and intellectual dimensions tend to be congruent. The process of sharing one's own feelings and thoughts quite openly allows others to do the same. Such a process of sharing provides the data from which highly meaningful discussions on the goals, objectives, purposes and outcomes of such Groups may be based. Intellectual ideas can be learned from others because of the new found respect for their point of view, coupled with a personal willingness to listen.

Communications Model. The communication model is closer to a society of peers, with more even sending and receiving, than it was in adolescence. There begins to be a dependency to seek expertise on a subject, and accept this from peers.

Behaviour Trends. The beginning congruence between emotional and intellectual dimensions brings some tranquility, yet depth to discussions. Groups work hard on the task of learning about self and others, but good-natured kidding often occurs. Things can now be laughed at that would have caused a fight during the adolescent state. Feedback can be given to an individual that would have resulted in deep hurt and resentment in earlier stages. Negative and positive feedback is more easily intermingled.

The trainer, whose influence had waned, is now seen as a stronger person than had been imagined. 'Maybe it takes more guts to sit back and let a Group learn on its own than to control it", someone suggests. Trainer information and experience is sought as a way of maximizing the potential learning from the laboratory.

Adult

Adult behaviour may best be characterized by self-determination and caring for others. Information from others is sought, but considered with some objectivity. The adult seeks to have others free like himself. The capacity to accept responsibility for decisions is also an adult characteristic. This security in dealing with others allows the adult to point out negative and positive dimensions of the same person and event. Conversely, it allows him to receive criticism without being destroyed, and to comfortably accept warmth and affection from others without embarrassment.

Intellectual. In the adult phase, Group members generate a thirst to find out more about their behaviour and the response others in the Group have to their behaviour. Emotions, long repressed during adolescence and young adulthood, can be openly discussed with some objectivity. A genuine desire to help others is added to the young adults' desire to receive help for himself. Structure, in the form of organization within the Group can be seen as useful and providing freedom, rather than something to be fought and destroyed. In summary, the intellectual concern is the emotional aspect of interpersonal involvement.

Emotional. The emotional dimension is characterized by deep concern for others, sensitivity to feelings of others, desires and willingness to express warm and positive feelings, and respect for individual privacy. The general emotional tone of the Group becomes warm and positive, yet, a high value is put on authenticity. The final phase of Group activity is seen as the capstone on the cycle of emotional growth through which the Group has been passing.

Communication Model. The communication model in the adult phase is only an extension and improvement of the society of peers which began to develop in the previous stage. The trainer is now perceived as one more human being in the Group, with some unique things to contribute but without dysfunctional perceptions of his being either an all-knowing brain prober or a non-helpful stumbling block.

Summary of Stages of Group Development.

Stages of Development	Intellectual Dimension	Emotional Dimension	Communication Model	Interaction of Intellectual and Emotional Dimension	Representative Behaviour
Infant	1. What is this? 2. Little cognitive understanding.	1. Safety, security, self-concept preservation. 2. Response to own viscera. 3. Response to emotions from others.	1. Receiving communication. 2. Output is only social noise.	1. Conflicting.	1. Dependency.
Child	1. Make sense of environment, order it, develop some beginning understanding.	1. Extension of safety and security needs.	1. Some response to communication from others. 2. Minimum of listening.	1. Partially supporting.	1. Attempts to organize. 2. Exploring. 3. Function as individuals.
Adolescent	1. What can I get out of this?	1. Need for acceptance and belonging. 2. Expression of peaks and valleys of emotion.	1. Understands communication but often disagrees.	1. Conflicting.	1. Rejection of authority. 2. Dependency and counter-dependency. 3. Blaming.
Young Adult	1. What can I learn from this? 2. It is possible to learn from peers. 3. Understand goals and objectives of training.	1. Awareness of own feelings and emotions of others. 2. Acceptance of inadequacies. 3. Recognition for what I really am.	1. Sharing.	1. Basically congruent.	1. Sharing information. 2. Leveling. 3. Openness.
Adult	1. Desire to find out more about self and others. 2. Discuss emotions from intellectual viewpoint. 3. What can I give to this?	1. High value on authenticity. 2. Acceptance of others, concern for feelings, desires for warmth, closeness. 3. Desire for growth.	1. Sharing as equals.	1. Congruent.	1. Self-direction. 2. Wider participation. 3. Useful structure. 4. Leadership shared. 5. Both negative and positive expressions are acceptable

Interaction of Intellectual and Emotional. Dealing with emotions as a legitimate intellectual concern paves the way for real congruence in these two dimensions. The emotional side of many intellectual ideas may now be explored. Likewise, the origin and meaning of our emotions can be put into clearer perspective with some theoretical understandings.

Representative Behaviour. The adult is capable of self-direction. His experience allows him to participate flexibly in a wide variety of activities. He is willing to share leadership with others, but assume responsibility for doing his share in the Group. Individual differences are often more pronounced in the adult phase.

After Maturity - What?

After the Group has passed through these phases, then what? For some Groups, there is no end in sight. Teams of people who work together are able to spiral upward. Groups of strangers, on the other hand, face a phase that is like old age and the preparation for death.

Individuals at the final stage of life begin to turn inward as if to solidify whatever gains they made in life. Much time is spent in reverie, reliving past moments of joy and recognition. Great enjoyment comes from recollecting old relationships and acquaintances.

Groups who must disband proceed through a similar phase to that of the older adult. The Group recounts their achievements and revels in those areas of accomplishment. Much happiness comes from recollecting the high points of their experience together. While they might not experience that moment ever again, knowing that it once occurred has deep meaning.

Some members of the Group seem fearful of the future and are reluctant to stop shaking the hands of their fellow Group members who are about to depart. Others seem content in the knowledge that similar experiences are available for the asking. Still others are content to have experienced it just once.

Individual Differences. This simplified description of Groups and their development has ignored differences between individuals. People do not, however, move in unison. Much of the excitement of Groups, just as in the elementary classroom, comes from witnessing the widely different speeds with which human beings experience maturation. One Group of individuals may make a strong contribution early in the Group development, and be unable to make significant contributions in later phases. Certain individuals are fixated at lower levels of personal growth rendering them incapable of leadership in the adult phase of Group development.

Conclusion

The true significance of the Group experience may be that it provides a complete cycle through human psychological growth, leading to higher levels of maturity. Individuals whose own growth has been stopped at infant or child levels get the exercise of moving toward emotional adulthood. They see others sprint far beyond them. While they cannot follow, witnessing others progress to higher plateaus provides a model to strive for and a certainty that higher emotional plateaus exist. Just as intellectual stretching in a university is good for our minds, so the psychological and emotional stretching is good for our personality. Like hikers going up a mountain, some are in the lead and others trail. Many may never reach the top. Yet, in the process, everyone is pulled to a higher level than where they started.

People function better as they move up the psychological dimensions of maturity. Looking realistically at our own and others' behaviour is valuable and moves us toward maturity. Plato recognized this when he commented, "The unexamined life is not worth living.". Such constant growth allows men to experience true success in the constant striving for an ever ascending objective.

UNIT IV

CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

A. PROBLEM-SOLVING SYSTEMS

Various authors have described systems and methods of creative problem-solving, differing considerably in the language used to describe creative problem-solving (CPS) and in their sequences of strategies. They are similar in the general agreement that there is a sequence of phases in CPS. The actual words and sequences used in a given description depend on the aim of the system. Many systems were designed to facilitate CPS in the areas of industry, technology, science and mathematics. The model used in the Life Skills course was adapted and designed to teach CPS skills to be applied to everyday life problems. The basic sequence is summarized in Table 1 on the next page.

Certain specific behaviours and strategies can be learned to help people become more creative in their problem-solving activities. You, as a coach, must be convinced through personal experience that CPS behaviours and strategies can be learned or improved so that you may convince Life Skills students of this fact. In addition, you will need skill in teaching CPS behaviours and strategies to others. The emphasis in learning CPS is on specific behaviours and strategies rather than the "system".

> "Learning to solve problems is like learning to play baseball. You learn to throw, to catch, to bat, to run bases, to make plays, and to execute all sorts of refinements of these basic skills. You do not learn to play baseball. You learn these basic skills separately, and you put them together in new combinations every game. ...There is no one-two-three method for solving problems. You learn the skills, and you combine them to play the game as circumstances dictate." (Hodnett, 1955)

TABLE 1

A SUMMARY OF A PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS[1]

I. Recognize the problem situation

Write a brief description in which you answer the questions, who? when? what? where? why? how?

II. Define the problem

a.	First:	Collect more facts. Ask more questions about your description. Ask as many questions as you can, but do not ask questions beginning with why, could or might.
b.	Second:	Ask questions beginning, "In what ways might ...?".
c.	Third:	Test each "In what ways might ...?" question with "why?".
d.	Fourth:	Choose the best "In what ways might ...?" question as your definition of the problem.

III. Choose a solution

a.	First:	Find possible solutions.
b.	Second:	Find criteria.
c.	Third:	Choose a solution.
d.	Fourth:	Predict results.

IV. Implement a solution

a.	First:	Plan how to carry out the solution.
b.	Second:	Carry out the plan.

V. Evaluate the result

Compare the result of the action with what you predicted for the results.

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[1] Adapted from Parnes, 1967.

"Solve" is an unfortunate word to use in discussing life problems because it implies the clarity and finality of mathematical problem-solving. A problem can be considered solved when your discomfort has been reduced to an acceptable level. A problem is solved when you are content or resigned to what you have done, when the situation is a little better, or when it is resolved in some way. The word resolve is more appropriate, given the connotation that it involves reducing the state of conflict and discomfort.

Solving problems involves the search for order or for overcoming disorder. A solution rarely if ever equals the final answer. It is one chosen as best in the circumstances. While looking for the best answer for a specific problem at a specific time, you hope to find one that will work for similar problems in the future. Students in the Life Skills course must develop the habit of approaching problems in an organized way. Creative problem-solving does not end with the search for order, but involves ordering as an active process. Problems change. Even as you study a problem it changes, and your efforts to solve it should not only change it but change with it. CPS is a dynamic process involving a constant shift of strategies that approach the problem from different directions; each direction may have an opposite that is equally useful.

In this unit, as in all training units, keep in mind that you will probably go through the typical sequence of "unconscious incompetence" where you are not skilled but do not realize it. Upon exposure to the training you will feel "conscious incompetence" where you recognize your lacks but have not increased your skills to any great extent; this is a particularly frustrating phase. With practice you feel "conscious competence" where the skills are painfully obvious and undeveloped, and you feel embarrassed at your attempts and the lack of smooth and polished performance. With practice you attain "unconscious competence" where the skills learned so painfully seem to be a natural part of your life and you feel "naturally competent".

Using CPS in the Context of the Life Skills Course

Although the behaviours involved in CPS are performed by individuals, the context of these behaviours usually involve other people. This is expecially true in the Life Skills course which seeks to develop the Problem-Solving Group. Thus in Life Skills training, human relations skills

and CPS skills are closely related. To quote the definition:

> "Life Skills means problem-solving behaviors appropriately and responsibly used in the management of personal affairs. As problem-solving behaviors, life skills liberate in a way, since they include a relatively small class of behaviors usable in many life situations. Appropriate use requires an individual to adapt the behaviors to time and place. Responsible use requires maturity, or accountability. And as behaviors used in the management of personal affairs, the life skills apply to the five areas of life identified as self, family, leisure, community and job." (Himsl, 1972)

Thus defined, "Life Skills" involve CPS where the person deals with events and people in various situations and is himself involved in or is a part of the problem. At times, the person has control of some elements of the problem and can manipulate them much as he would the pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. Usually, however, the person finds that because life problems almost always involve other people, he is not the only manipulator. Because several people act on the problem, it too changes and seldom "holds still" like a puzzle. This calls for skills that help the person interact with others as well as skills to act on ever-changing problems or sets of problems.

Because we deal with problems constantly through life, we learn many skills to deal with them. The practised Life Skills student performs these behaviours appropriately and responsibly. He therefore knows "what" he does and "why" he does it and can tell the meaning of his behaviour. He would say something like "I looked at him, leaned forward, and repeated what he said, because I wanted to attend, I wanted to gather information, I wanted to define the problem". The skilled student in response to a question about how to define a problem, can reply, "Ask questions beginning with 'In what ways might ...?' and identify assumptions by asking 'why'?".

As well as explaining his behaviours or what to do, the skilled student can perform a sample of the behaviours on demand. In response to a question of how he might gather facts from an authority to help define a problem, he can, in a real or simulated situation, show how he gets the information and records it. Whether he does this by writing a letter, interviewing in an office, writing on a notepad, recording an interview on a tape recorder or just asking questions depends on how he chooses to apply the skills

B. TRANSLATING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

The major steps in the Life Skills problem-solving model are: recognition of a problem, definition of a problem, choosing an alternative solution, implementation of an alternative and evaluation of the result. These steps provide some definition of the problem-solving process, but the words are too abstract to translate into behaviours. The instruction to "define your problem" sounds more like an order than a guide to action -- you recognize that it should be done and that it would help you, but it provides no behavioural guides. In addition, using this level of abstraction leads to problems itself. People recognize the words as familiar and, assuming that they understand them, they try to apply them without translation to a less abstract level. For example, they try to define a problem or identify alternatives. What do you do when defining a problem? No behaviours precisely match these words. What people actually do from one time to another in defining a problem differs even though the same term describes the purpose of their behaviour.

In defining a problem, for example, one person states a question about what he wants to achieve, another names the obstacles that interfere with his progress toward a goal, another summarizes in one sentence what bothers him, or a student in the Life Skills course may form a question beginning with the words, "In what ways might ...?". This last approach provides a search device for generating ideas about the problem as well as defining it, thus combining two strategies with one operation. Words like define and identify are abstractions of processes, labels for strategies or purposes, or explanations of a set of behaviours, and are not descriptions or prescriptions for action.

Even though you recognize differences between abstract labels and the actual behaviours, there is yet another problem when you try matching behaviour with theoretical concepts. You know you can't see someone define a problem. When someone asks a question starting with the words "In what ways might ...?", can you always assume he is defining a problem? May it be that he is actually seeking alternative solutions? Is he defining a problem if he doesn't understand the relationship between his behaviour and its inferred purpose? Is he merely parroting a response he knows the coach wants? If he can verbalize the connection, what guarantee do you have that he is motivated to use the process when he is not under observation?

One of your tasks, as a coach of Life Skills, involves understanding the relationship between the theory and the practice, translating abstract directions into specific behavioural operations, and modelling those operations.

The theory underlining Life Skills includes the three dimensions "Human Relations Skills", "Problem Solving Skills" and "Thinking Skills". These are all inter-related, and students, if successful in the course, bring them to bear on their life problems. The description of the theory is quite abstract; it only provides a framework to help you understand how the behaviours fit together and how they can result in CPS for the Life Skills student. The abstract labels must be redefined into behaviours for practice of CPS. However, behavioural descriptions lose meaning if removed from the theoretical framework to which they refer; the meaning is contained in the interpretation given to the behaviours, not in the behaviour itself. Because the behavioural descriptions consist of "overt" behaviours like look at, read, lean forward, they can be interpreted differently, depending on their context. They can also overlap: a behaviour like interviewing might occur in defining a problem or in choosing alternatives. Thus behaviours have no theoretical meaning or explanatory power outside of their theoretical context. This is the importance of theory in the the practice of coaching Life Skills.

Some Behaviours Used In Creative Problem-Solving

To give you a feeling for the variety of behavioural skills included in the CPS process, the following list is provided. The behavioural skills are still at a rather abstract level and are presented in only a general classification of types. In the last part of this unit, some of these behaviours will be categorized in terms of the Life Skills problem-solving sequence, and definitions of some of the strategies (or heuristics) will be provided.

The many "heuristic strategies" catalogued by Straus and associates for use in CPS can be listed according to the following groups:

1. Abstract, verbalize, generalize, symbolize
   Concretize, simulate, exemplify, model, diagram, display, chart

2. Adapt, change, transform
   Substitute, vary, manipulate, translate

3. Add, multiply, increase, build up, expand, exaggerate, optimize
   Subtract, divide, decrease, eliminate, reduce, understate, minimize

4. Analyze, define, detach, verbalize, classify, separate, evaluate, test, check, contrast
   Synthesize, organize, relate, associate, combine, compare, force, systematize, rationalize

5. Concentrate, focus, force
   Disperse, release, randomize, brainstorm, relax, defer, purge, play, intuit, dream, imagine, visualize

6. Assume, defer
   Question, evaluate, search

7. Verbalize, experience, purge, brainstorm, recall
   Incubate, relax, intuit

8. List, record, display, guess
   Check, compare, test, evaluate, select, interpret, predict, hypothesize

9. Memorize, experience, record, practice, repeat, learn, copy
   Recall, retrieve, search, cycle

10. Commit, select, involve, leap in, teach, motivate, start, plan
    Defer, hold back, detach, stop

11. Work forwards
    Work backwards

12. Work in
    Work out

The Life Skills course encourages use of a wide variety of CPS behaviours such as these: asking questions (for information or clarification), paraphrasing and summarizing, interpreting and checking meanings, giving and receiving feedback, listening, interviewing, measuring, comparing, rank ordering in terms of some criterion, predicting, sequencing, tabulating, listing, categorizing, defining, generalizing, deferring judgement, evaluating, forcing relationships to produce new ideas and relationships, rating, planning, fantasizing to produce new ideas, using tentative combination to study relationships, predicting outcomes of plans of action, reading, watching and listening to films and tapes, observing on tours and elsewhere, recording data in a systematic manner, seeking and examining assumptions, developing

and using criteria to assist in decision-making, evaluating the consequences of actions, and identifying the need to change behaviours.

The chapter entitled "A Description of the Life Skills Course" lists these broad skills: interviewing, questioning, comparing, identifying assumptions, using feedback, listing, skill teaching, describing feeling, organizing information, fantasizing, sensitizing, role-playing, using help, using multi-media sources, contracting, planning, using criteria, supporting others, deferring judgement, reporting, summarizing, and solving a problem with a system.

The preceding list of skills used in the various problem-solving phases and processes illustrates one possible classification. It is not to be considered complete and should be added to or changed as you become familiar with the Life Skills problem-solving system through understanding the theory of Life Skills and using the Life Skills lessons which deal with the system. As can be seen from this classification, any particular skill is not necessarily confined to one and only one phase of problem-solving. Typically, a given skill can be used in several phases, with the focus or application of the skill changing depending on which problem-solving phase it is used in. This classification attempts to provide a start at grouping the skills that might be most appropriate for a given phase or aspect of the problem-solving system.

C. STEPS OF GROUP PROBLEM-SOLVING

The Use of the Life Skills Group in Problem-Solving

In order to solve problems you need information and ideas. You need different ways of looking at a problem and of attacking a problem.

If a problem involves other people, as most problems do, it helps to work with other people to solve the problem. Several people have more information than just one person. Different people see different ways to look at the problem and different ways to solve the problem. Working together, a group can share information, different viewpoints and different feelings. Together they can figure out a number of ways to deal with the problem. An individual can then select the way he wishes to deal with his problem.

Just any group of people do not make a problem-solving group. It takes skill and practice for people to work well together. Most groups need to practise helpful behaviours. The sections on Effective Communication and Helpful and Harmful Group Behaviours in Unit III describe these behaviours, and the Life Skills lessons give opportunity to practise them.

Groups can sometimes solve problems just by sharing ideas, but often it helps to have a systematic way to go about attacking a problem. Moving step by step, in an orderly way, the group can check to see that they have not overlooked anything important. This section describes one such step-by-step method for a group to solve problems.

A Five-Step Method of Problem-Solving

Step One: Decide on, or become aware of, a problem

At least one person in the group has to be aware a problem exists and point this out to the group. Being aware there is a problem means a person

feels dissatisfaction in himself or in others. He may have vague feelings of discomfort and feel that things are not going well or something doesn't fit. This feeling needs to be expressed and brought into the open so that it can be handled.

Examples: The person who initiates this step might say something like:

a. 'Man, do I ever feel uptight - this group really is tense today. What's bugging everyone?"

b. 'Mary, you look upset about something. Can we help you in any way?"

c. "I happen to know that some of us have problems with booze and I'm one of them. Can we talk about this and get some help on it?"

d. "I'm having problems with my boss and I'd like to get help from you people."

None of these statements is very specific as to just what the problem is; they just indicate that there is a problem in a certain area of life and that the group might be able to help in the solution of this problem. If the group indicated that they would try to help, the next task is to define the problem.

Step Two: Define the Problem

Some agreement on the definition of the problem must be reached, since it can't be discussed until it has been defined. By having the group think and talk about the problem, different ways of looking at the problem are expressed. Different aspects of the situation are brought out so that all members get a better understanding of it. Agreement on the nature of the problem is necessary, although the agreement doesn't have to be total; clarity among the group members is the most important thing.

The group has to agree on what problem it is going to solve - the main problem. Some group members may see other, related or lesser problems in the situation, but to proceed with the problem-solving process the group

members must agree on the main problem. The group may want to solve some of the other problems later, but the small-group-problem-solving process is intended to deal with one problem at a time.

During this phase the group talks about the problem and many different aspects of the problem; identifies the causes; gathers and organizes information; identifies the assumptions being made; stops blaming others as the cause; expresses thoughts and beliefs; finds out what members feel, believe and know; identifies the need for more information than the group members have; talks about the different aspects of the problem and the extent of the problem - how broad the problem is, and how many parts of life it affects; separates it from other problems and extraneous matters; sets necessary limits on the problem and decides what part of the problem can be dealt with by the group; contains the problem; limits its scope; defines it in written form and makes clear to all members that they understand and agree on what the problem to be handled will be. By doing a good job of defining the problem it might be said that it is already half-solved.

Examples: To start this phase of the problem-solving process things like this might be said:

a. "I think that one reason the group is so tense is that we are getting a different coach Monday, and nobody is sure what's going to happen. We just got used to Dave, and Monday we get Deloris - we don't know her at all."

b. Mary may say, "My kid is running around with a bunch of pot heads and I'm afraid he's going to land in jail for drugs or something. How do you talk sense into kids nowadays?"

c. A guy with a drinking problem may say, "When I come into town I don't know anyone so I stay around the pub. There's nothing else to do in this damned town so I end up drunk almost every night."

d. "Tell us what kind of trouble you are having with your boss. Give us some examples."

These examples illustrate the beginnings of the definition of the problem. When the group has decided what they are going to help with, then they go on to step three.

Step Three A: Produce ideas, solutions, and facts related to the problem as defined

Having agreed on the problem to be solved, the group begins to produce ideas about it - many different ideas. A good way to do this is to have each member say to himself, "I'll let my mind wander freely over the problem and I'll say whatever occurs to me". The members do not worry about how good these ideas are at this time. That comes later. What is important is that they state lots of ideas about the problem and record them so that they can look at them later. If a person is willing to say what he's thinking without judging his own thoughts, he would not like others to judge his thoughts at this time either. Rather, each member supports and encourages others to speak. The ideas produced gradually build up until they begin to form possible solutions to the problem.

The final part of this step will be a list of the possible solutions to the problem as it was defined. Before this list is made, however, other things need to be done. The group thinks up and records as many causes of the problem as possible, regardless of their immediate importance. They don't overlook anything if it could possibly be connected with the problem. The group needs to get all possible solutions out in the open regardless of how foolish they may seem at the time. Many ideas and many solutions are needed. If enough ideas are given, there is bound to be a better chance of good ones showing up in the list.

The group seeks out and relates new knowledge to the problem as defined; finds out what others outside the group know and think about the problem to help them evaluate their own ideas; gathers information and facts on the questions raised in the process of defining the problem; becomes aware of unanswered questions and disagreements, and seeks information relevant and useful for resolving these differences; seeks to increase the number of alternatives and options available to solve the problem instead of being stuck on just one or two ways of solving it; assesses the ramifications of the problem - both the extent of the problem and the intensity; and it looks at the depth of the problem.

Once the numerous ideas regarding the problem have been brought out and recorded, there may need to be a redefinition of the problem (Step Two). Then ideas which are most relevant to the redefined problem are selected and listed.

Examples: Behaviours which typify this stage might be some of the following:

a. "One way we could help the group adjust to a new coach is to have both coaches with us for a few days next week."

b. 'Mary, I heard about a real good tape made by a kid who was strung out on speed. Sometime after the tape was made he killed himself. The kids who heard it on the radio were really shook by it. Maybe this will jolt your kid and his friends. I don't know though, you can never tell about kids nowadays."

c. "Hey, why don't you guys try to just sit in front of a full glass of beer and let it stay there - don't drink it; just sit there."

d. "What you need is some power over your boss. You've got no influence on him. Why not marry his daughter or get friendly with his wife."

As the examples show, in this phase the ideas are not judged or criticized because the purpose at this point is just to produce them. But, at some point, each one of them must be examined critically or "tested against reality". This brings us to the next sub-step.

Step Three B: Examine the ideas critically

By examining the ideas, or "reality testing" them, we mean deciding whether or not they are relevant and practical, and what would probably happen if they were put into use as solutions to the problems. By "relevant" we mean that they refer to the problem being discussed. By "practical" we mean that they actually could be used by the person who has the problem. Some of the critical examining will be done through group discussion - a pooling of knowledge, experience and opinions. Further information on some aspects will also be needed, information which the group does not have within it. Such things as statistics, laws, regulations, services available, etc. will have to be investigated. The data collected by the group or brought back to it by the group members must be studied to see what relevance, meaning or implication it has in relation to the ideas being examined.

The process of examining the ideas critically includes collecting data and examining it for relevance and meaning, or implication. The group judges the ideas it has produced to see whether they are relevant and practical and to imagine what would happen if they were actually used as solutions. The group members do this by sharing their knowledge, experience and opinions and by collecting and studying information or data. During this process of reality testing, the points for and against the various ideas will be listed.

There is one more important contribution the group can make to the examination of its ideas: the members can say how they feel about them or how they think certain people involved in the situation would feel if these ideas were adopted as solutions. People's feelings are always important, of course, and in problem-solving an attempted solution may succeed or fail because of the way those concerned feel about it. When the group discusses the feelings involved, it will include them in the list of points for and against the ideas they are examining.

The implications of certain solutions may rule them out on preliminary examination. Gather all the facts which have a bearing on the remaining solutions until there is an adequate basis for decision. In difficult cases, it may be necessary to organize and weigh such facts in detail: is each fact accurate, reliable, relevant, correctly weighed, important, etc.? Three criteria for testing a proposed solution might be: (a) Does it in fact help solve the problem? (b) Is it possible to put into practice? (c) Are there any bad side effects and problems created by the solution? One must insure that the conclusions are not prematurely drawn by reason of failure to examine all significant facts, or failure to bring the proposed solution into accord with available facts.

Examples:

a. "How do you feel, Dave [coach], about having two coaches in the group for a while until we get used to the new one? Are you free to be with us for a few days next week?"

b. "We have some ideas to help Mary. Has anyone heard that tape? Do you know where we can get it?" Joe says, "I heard about it and I think that you can get it from CBC some way, but I don't know how. Does anyone know how you can get stuff from the CBC?"

c. "I don't feel that sitting in front of a full glass of beer is going to get me anywhere. You can't just sit there; once I start drinking even a bit I seem to end up drunk."

d. 'Marrying my boss's daughter is no good. I'll quit first. Have you seen her? And messing around with his wife will produce a lot more problems than I have now."

After the group has gone over each idea that it is seriously considering as a solution and crossed out some, combined some into similar categories, predicted their outcome and consequences, and got a score sheet of points "for" and "against" each of them, it should be ready for the next sub-step of choosing one thing to act on.

Step Three C: Select the best solution

The group should then try to come to a consensus on the best solution to the problem. If the group has defined the problem, produced possible solutions and "reality tested" them, we assume that they have a list of the proposed solutions, showing the favorable and unfavorable features of each one. These are what the group works on in selecting the best solutions from the list. If the problem applies only to one or two members of the group, that is, it is not a problem for the group as a whole, then reaching a consensus is not as critical since those individuals directly involved must necessarily have the final say as to what they are going to do. The group, however, seeks a promise from these members to put some solution into action and they use their knowledge and skills to help these members reach a "best" solution. Sometimes one "perfect" solution stands out from the rest and sometimes not. Sometimes at this stage the better parts of two or more solutions may be combined. Often the solution is actually a complex plan of action requiring many sub-solutions. Frequently, life being what it is, there may be no really satisfying solution and the group must be content with the best of several poor solutions.

Finally, the group re-examines the implications of the selected solution, looks to see what might happen if the solution is implemented and tries to predict outcomes. The group members must feel confident that the solution would be practical to use. If for some reason the solution does not seem right, the group should consider another solution. At any rate, by whatever means, whether the member or members with the problem decide on which solution is the best (using the group to help them decide) or whether the group reaches a consensus as to the best solution to the group's problem, some type of decision is necessary in order to make

any detailed plan for action and to put the solution into practice in the next step.

Examples:

a. "Have we all agreed then that we will have both Dave and Deloris as coaches for Monday and Tuesday next week so that we can get at this problem of changing coaches? Is there any one who is unhappy with this solution?"

b. "Mary, will you get together with your kid and his friends with this tape? Maybe it won't do any good but how could it hurt? We want a commitment from you that you won't just sit and complain about how much trouble you have with your kid. We want you to decide to do something. Will you agree to try this tape thing?"

c. "Well, we've spent a lot of time working through this drinking problem with you three guys. There's not much we as a group can do for you, but the idea that you all try AA looks like the best solution so far although we know that you don't care too much for the idea. It's better than getting smashed all the time and going to jail every week."

d. "Since I can't quit my job because I've got no place to go, I've just got to live with this crummy boss. Figuring out how to keep him happy is a good solution and we got some good ideas there so let's work out some plans for doing it."

Step Four A: Plan the action in detail

The proposed action needs to be thought through in as much detail as is considered necessary by the group or individuals involved - how it may be done and the implications of it (what may happen as a result of taking the action). When the group members are satisfied that they are moving in the right direction, they make a detailed plan for action. This plan for action is then judged for its relevance: whether it will in fact solve the problem. It is also judged for its practicality. If there is any doubt whether the plan will work, the group will want to do some replanning to make it more relevant to the problem or more practical

to put into effect. During any replanning process the group will want to return to Step Three and reconsider different ideas or alternative solutions that were produced. In fact, while planning for action, the group may want to refer to other earlier steps also. It is desirable that all members contribute to the plan for action, especially those who are immediately involved.

Examples:

a. "Since Dave will be busy Monday, we need to plan out what we're going to do that day. Maybe the first thing to do is see if we can get the training supervisor to spring Dave for some time Monday. Then if he is free, we can make more detailed plans on how we're going to handle the problem of changing coaches."

b. "We know where to get a copy of the tape. Now we need to plan how to get Mary's kid and his friends to listen to it and take it seriously. The group feels that the best approach is to spring it on them at a party. We need to plan this party and where the best point would be to play the tape. The first thing .....".

c. "We don't know much about AA. Let's get some stuff to read first and then maybe have a member come and talk to us about it. Dave [coach], what information do you have on AA?"

d. "What can you do that makes your boss happy? You said he really likes canoeing! Who knows where we can get hold of some material on canoeing trips for Harry to mention to his boss?"

The above examples illustrate the beginning of the detailed planning. The group must go through the steps of how they or the people involved are going to carry out the plan so that they can be prepared as much as possible for any surprises. You can never foresee everything, but you can be prepared so that you reduce the number of surprises you run into. Once the group or others are reasonably satisfied that they know what they are going to do and feel comfortable about doing it, then they must DO IT. That is the next step.

Step Four B: Do it

To avoid being wrapped up in just discussion and planning and letting it go at that, it is very necessary, in order to solve any problems, to do something about them, not just plan to do something about them. If the previous steps have been made in sufficient detail and thoroughness, then carrying out the plan should be obvious. Doing it requires courage and mutual support among the group members; if the group is working as a good Life Skills group, then this support will be there. If no action is taken and if no change in behaviour occurs, then much of the work in previous steps has been so much hot air, unless the problem was resolved by its clarification. This is a possible outcome if the problem was one only of confusion or lack of information. But even here, the person(s) should change his behaviour if he has gained a different viewpoint on the issue. Practically every analysis of every problem will imply some action or course of action which must be taken if the problem is to be handled.

Step Five: Evaluate the outcome of the action

In order to learn from experience you can't just experience, you must also think about the experience. In evaluating the outcome of carrying out a plan, you compare what happened with what you predicted or expected to happen to find out what in fact the relation is between a plan and execution of the plan. The evaluation should include a statement of how well the action helped solve the problem, how the plan that was formulated compared with the actual action taken, which aspects of the plan were accurate forecasts and which were not and what was left out of the plan.

Also, what usually occurs is that new problems arise out of the solutions (actions) to the old ones. Thus there may be a re-cycle back to a redefinition of the problem or definition of a new but related problem or a new facet of the old problem. Rarely do things get solved once and for all, and so there may be more problems as a result of solving the old problem. Hopefully the problems will be better, more sensible, more worthwhile and more important than the old ones. If the action of problem-solving is successful, you at least should not have the same old problems still.

Examples:

a. "Basically, I think our session with Dave and Deloris [coaches] went well. The use of the Life Skills vignette idea was real good and a lot of new ideas came out of it. Why don't we write this up so that other groups can use it when they have problems with switching coaches?"

b. "That tape really stopped them short. Some of the kids got mad about it and some thought the guy was real groovy, but some of them started thinking about their use of dope. My kid was mad at me for playing the tape at the party and we had a big fight about it afterward but I think it got to him. I hope so."

c. "I'm sorry but I can't take those AA types. We went to their meetings for two weeks and I got turned off completely. What happened to you Jake? How do you like them?"

d. "Those maps of canoeing trips excited the boss. He really liked them, and now he's finally off my back. Right now he wants me to take a weekend trip with him. I don't even know how to paddle a canoe and I don't like water. I don't know which is worse, having him on my back at work or getting involved in this fast water madness."

Again these examples are the beginnings of the evaluation stage. The group should compare the plan made with what was actually done and find out what worked and what didn't and why. What should have been done differently? Could we have planned for it in a better way? Particular attention would be paid to how you are going to behave differently now than you did before. It does no good to go through the process of problem-solving if you are going to keep on doing things the same way as before and have the same problems over again. The least you can expect is that you will now have different problems, and perhaps they may be easier to deal with. Also, by using a step-by-step method you have learned a way to solve your problems better and how to prevent your solutions from making more and worse problems for you.

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UNIT V

STRUCTURED HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING

The term "structured human relations training" refers to training for Life Skills coaches in specific behavioural components which enable one person to effectively help another.

Life Skills coaching is a special kind of helping activity, and a coach is a special kind of helper, an agent of individual change. Since you are to function in this capacity, it is imperative that you understand certain principles of helping which can cause individual change.

The Modelling Function

From earliest childhood a great deal of the learning which takes place is imitative. Commonly a child imitates the behaviours of his parents. Parents are said to be behavioural models for the child. Imitative learning continues in adulthood, and in your role of Life Skills coach you can utilize this phenomenon to help your students. In order to insure that imitation of the skills you model does occur, you must first demonstrate to your students that you have something to offer which is of value to them. You must demonstrate that, given the student's life situation, the skills you are modelling will enable him to do better in that situation than he is now able to do. This implies that you must learn to understand the student's life situation and precisely what "to do better" means in his terms of reference. You must communicate <u>your</u> understanding of the student's situation to him so that he can know that you do understand. In this way you can become in his eyes a "significant other", and as such, a stimulus for insights, a potential source of reinforcement and a model which he is likely to imitate. If you are functioning at a sufficiently high level in the helping components, your students will progress towards your own level of functioning.

This course will train you to communicate at a high level in these helping components. You will learn how to use your earned position of "potential reinforcer" to effect positive behavioural change in your students. Your helping will set them free in a variety of situations to respond in ways that will enhance rather than decrease their self-esteem.

The Helping Process

Helping according to this usage is a teaching process. The effectiveness of this teaching process is determined by the relationship which develops between the coach and the student. The behavioural components of the helping process enable the coach to understand the student and at the same time to influence the student's behaviour. These components are of two kinds: responsive, which focuses on the student's experience and aids his development; and initiative, which originates in the experience of the coach and stimulates the student to take positive action to help himself.

The responsive component is made up of attending behaviours used in conjunction with empathy, respect and specificity. By observing the coach modelling these responsive dynamics at a high level, the student can learn to understand and respect himself in specific thought and action. Only when he can apply these skills to himself, can he show real empathy and respect for another person by entering the other's personality and imagining how he sees things in specific situations.

The initiative component is made up of attending behaviours used in conjunction with genuineness, confrontation and immediacy. As the coach models these dynamics at a high level, the student learns to be honest and authentic with himself, to challenge his own excuses and self-deceit, and to face his problems as they arise. Eventually, as he approaches a higher level himself, the student will be able to use the same dynamics in his interaction with others.

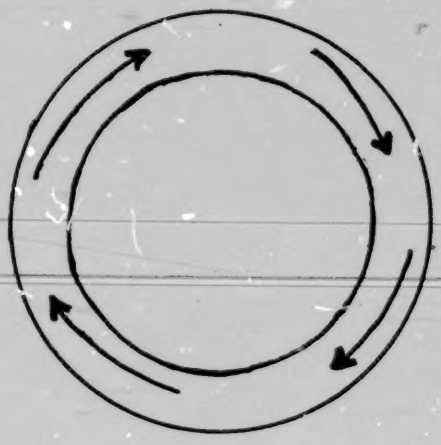
As the coach communicates the dynamics of these components, the student becomes conscious of his behaviours "in process" rather than in retrospect; he goes through a process of self-exploration in specific and immediate situations; his self-evaluation leads to significant self-understanding.

With self-understanding, and with the example of the coach's behaviour in his mind, the student becomes motivated to act. At this point he is open to and actively seeks knowledge, strategies and skills which will help him accomplish his goals.

In a helping relationship where the coach is communicating responsive and initiative components at appropriate levels, the student becomes aware that his own communications are being understood and reflected back to him with unusual sensitivity and accuracy. This results in the student really listening to himself. He engages in introspection both of himself and his perception of the world; through this process he is moved to re-examine and restructure his previously flawed understanding of himself in the world.

In order for this development to occur, the coach's communications must manifest a balance between warmth and sensitivity on the one hand and forceful direction on the other. The student progresses toward self-direction and self-control by selecting from the coach's varied behavioural responses those items which will increase his own flexibility and his own repertoire of courses of action.

The Cyclical Process of Increasingly Effective Functioning



Self-exploration leads to self-understanding, understanding is manifested in action, the results produced by the action constitute feedback of new information, which leads to further exploration, new understandings and new and more effective action. The cycle becomes a continuous process of self-improvement.

Summary of the Objectives of Helping

Objective One. To help the student engage in exploration of himself in his life situation. For the student, this is very much like the recognition and definition phases of problem-solving. The coach's use of the responsive components brings him fully into the picture, enabling him to understand the student and his problems.

Objective Two. To help the student understand himself in his life situation. Exploration does not necessarily lead to understanding. The coach's careful use of the initiative components helps the activity of exploration to culminate in understanding.

Objective Three. To help the student take action to improve his situation based on his understanding. The coach helps the student plan an appropriate course of action and trains him in specific skills which will enable him to carry out the course of action.

An Approach for Achieving the Helping Objectives

1. The coach will be most helpful in the first phase by responding to the student. In order to help, the coach must first understand the student. He does this by attending fully to the student and focusing the dialogue on the student's feelings and experience. He employs the responsive components of the helping relationship. There are three dynamics to this component:

   Empathy - you try to understand with great accuracy how the student experiences the world by trying to see things through his eyes. You communicate this understanding to the student.

   Respect - you communicate to the student your belief that he has the potential to manage his life effectively, and that it matters to you that he succeed in doing so.

   Specificity - you help the student be very specific about his own feelings, experiences and perception of himself in his world.

2. The coach will be most helpful in the second phase when he employs the initiative components. Having established empathy between them, the coach now applies his own experience to his understanding of the student and his situation. The dialogue is focused on the feelings and experience of the coach in relation to the student's problems. The coach employs the initiative components of the helping relationship. Again there are three dynamics to this component:

   Genuiness - you represent yourself and your reaction to the student as authentically as possible. Your feelings and reactions to the student may be mixed at first since you do not yet fully understand him and his problems. Initially it is more a question of avoiding overt phoniness; later this dynamic can be brought fully into play.

   Confrontation - you use this dynamic when you point out to the student inconsistencies between his declared perception of himself in the world and his actions. You also confront him with differences between your perceptions of situations and his. Confrontation must be followed by the means to resolve these differences.

   Immediacy - you focus the dialogue and exploration on the present instant of your relationship with the student. You keep the relationship focused on the events "here and now".

3. The coach will be most helpful in the third phase by assisting the student to plan and implement action for dealing with his problem situations. The process of planning and implementing a course of action is developed on the model of a problem-solving system (see Unit IV). In some instances, the plan of action will be dictated by long term objectives. In other instances, your helping will be of the "crisis intervention" variety, the plan of action being based on urgent short term requirements.

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UNIT VI

DEVELOPING COURSES OF ACTION

In this section a variety of strategies and techniques useful in development of courses of action will be described in as much detail as is practical. Your continuing professional development depends to a great degree on your sustaining an on-going effort to master these approaches and in constantly enlarging your personal repertoire of strategies and techniques.

Principal among the strategies and techniques you will need to perform the coaching functions are:

Problem Solving Systems (see Unit IV)
Counselling Techniques
Contingency Management Procedures
BSD Training Systems

The material which follows together with the training procedures which you will experience are designed to familiarize you with the concepts and ensure at least a minimally acceptable level of competence in their practice. Their ultimate mastery is your responsibility and obligation. The bibliography which follows each section is a useful reference for your self-directed course of study.

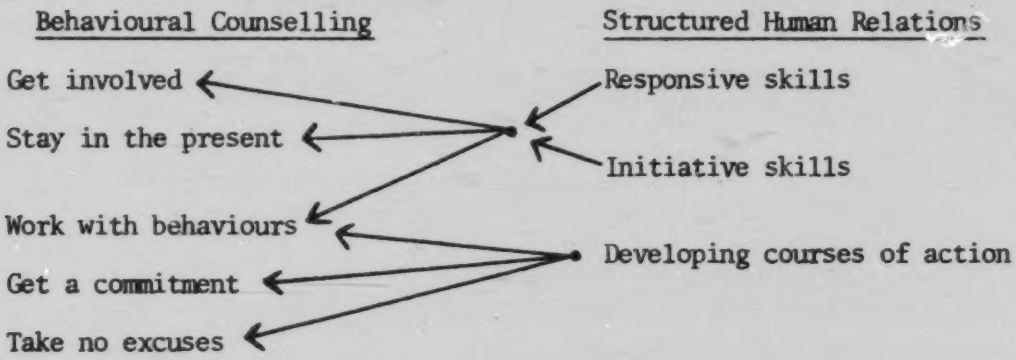
A. DEVELOPING COURSES OF ACTION - STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

Behavioural Counselling

The responsive and initiative components outlined in Unit V on structured human relations training are the critical parts of the first phase of behavioural counselling.

That model has general application to the helping process; you will find the skills described essential in establishing your relationship with each of the members of your training group and later your Life Skills group.

It is important to ensure the social and emotional development of an individual in pace with his acquisition of skills and knowledge; thus, behavioural counselling is included among the coaching activities. Coaches are not primarily counsellors or therapists, but they must recognize and work with human feelings if they are to help others utilize their potential to the fullest extent. Dealing with a student's feelings in positive and helpful ways requires the application of previously learned skills within a model specifically related to counselling. It is useful to integrate the components of structured human relations with a behavioural counselling model.



The two models complement and reinforce each other: the flesh of technique and strategy on the bones of theory. The synthesis yields a clear cut direction with specific instructions on how to accomplish movement in that direction.

Group Behavioural Counselling

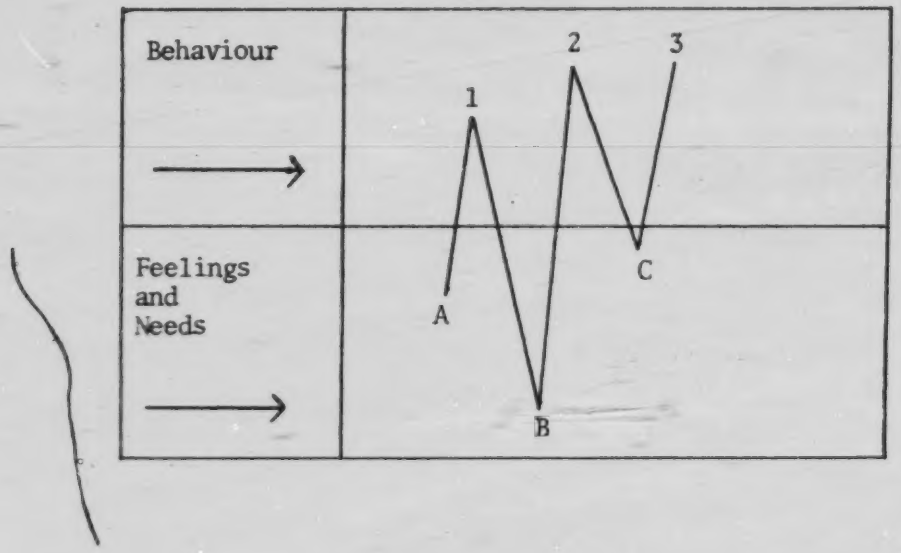
As an individual works through a difficult interpersonal problem, he has an important need to confide in at least one other person. The group, representing a total community, offers a suitable context for helping members work out their problems. Few people can derive adequate satisfaction from their functioning, knowing their friends don't approve of their behaviour.

In the Life Skills coach training program, behavioural counselling is primarily a group process centred on the observable performance of

the individual, in which he recognizes a behaviour change that would enable him to behave in a more BSD manner, and he makes a commitment to the group to work toward this change.

In both group and individual counselling, it must be remembered that those doing the counselling are not professional psychologists. They are not trained to delve into the underlying, complex causes of human behaviour. For Life Skills purposes, the most productive approach is counselling only in regard to specific, observable behaviour which is occurring now, demanding specific behaviour changes according to contracted agreements and established group standards, and ignoring the underlying reasons.

It is usually assumed that behaviour results from attempts to meet certain personal needs or because of personal feelings. But behaviour also causes personal feelings and needs. In the illustration, the area below the line represents hidden feelings and needs. The area above the line shows observable actions. Feelings at Point A result in Behaviour 1, which can be seen. This action (Behaviour 1) has its own consequences, which send the individual to Feeling Point B. This in turn results in some observable act at Behaviour 2. The consequence of Behaviour 2 leads to Feeling Point C and so on.



The diagram shows that changes in behaviour bring about corresponding changes in feeling (act right - feel right). The importance of this to the group members is that it permits them to obtain vital feeling (attitudinal) changes by concentrating only on observable behaviour and concrete facts. Concentrating on behaviour and not the underlying reasons for the behaviour eliminates guess work on the part of the group, and respects the individual's right to privacy. Furthermore, it is apt to be a more efficient method of behavioural change, since most of us feel better after doing better, not after speculating on why we do what we are doing.

There are five rules or steps in the behavioural counselling process:

1. Get involved. The group must become emotionally involved with each other; there must be an open and honest relationship on all sides. Involvement means caring (I'm interested in you. It's important to me that you learn, etc.).

2. Stay in the present. De-emphasize the past, especially past failures. The past is useful only as it provides information, methods, options and ideas to work with in the present. Concentration on past inabilities or searching for past causes to present problems only provides the individual with excuses and justifications for current poor performance.

3. Work with behaviour. Avoid reasons or justifications, motives or intentions, except when they relate directly to behaviour. (For example, if an individual intends a certain outcome, but his action produces an outcome different or opposite to his intention, then this incongruence should be dealt with). Work with what a person's behaviour conveys to others about himself and his intentions.

4. Get a commitment for change. The individual must decide if his present behaviour has desirable results. He should ask "Is this helping me? What can I do about it? What will I agree to do about it?" This constitutes an important part of the problem-solving process. The person must also understand that meeting his commitment is his responsibility. It is important that the person, with the group's help, make a realistic plan to do so.

5. Take no excuses. Rather, ask "How will you do it?" and "When will you do it?" This lets the individual know that the group considers him a worthwhile person, and is willing to wait for him to fulfill his commitment. Should the individual continue to have trouble changing his behaviour, the whole group together should examine the plan they made with him, and change it if necessary.

Behavioural counselling is a teaching process, not a healing one. "Training is the best form of therapy!" In the group setting, it is the responsibility of all members to point out to the individual the realistic consequences of a behaviour, to help suggest alternative courses of action, to let the individual make his own choice, to stick by him, help build up his self-image and encourage him while he is trying to change, and to hold him to his commitment and never give up.

Our approach to behavioural counselling has several sources, principal among which are Allen Ivey's "Attending Behaviours", Robert Carkhuff's "Systematic Human Relations Training" and William Glasser's "Reality Therapy". Common to all these sources is the conviction that "counselling is the releasing of an already existing capacity in a potentially competent individual".

In the Life Skills coach training program, counselling is considered primarily a group process. However, as Life Skill coaches, you may have to deal with private individual counselling over a personal problem.

Problem Identification and Definition

Very seldom do students begin a counselling interview by requesting help in accomplishing specific behaviour changes. They are usually confused and uncertain. As coach, you begin by listening carefully to the student's concerns, trying to understand and assess his thoughts and feelings. Try to see from the student's point of view, try to communicate your understanding, and try to determine if you are perceiving accurately.

For some students, this expression of empathic understanding may be enough. Listening without condemning may relieve guilt feelings and

enable the student to verbalize his plans and proceed without further action by you. However, most students need further assistance. You must help the student describe how he would like to act instead of the way he currently behaves, and you must help the student translate his confusion and fears into a goal that he would like to accomplish and which would begin to resolve his problems. This can be accomplished by focusing on specific behaviours in the student's present situation. What precisely is going on in his everyday life? In what ways do others respond to his words, thoughts and feelings?

Difficulties in Formulating Goals

The process of translating amorphous feelings into specific goals is not easy. The following sections examine seven stumbling blocks that face you in making the translation, and some ways you can overcome them.

1. The Problem is Another's Behaviour. Frequently the problem has nothing to do with his own behaviour, but is attributed, by him, entirely to deficiencies in another's behaviour. The picture presented is one in which his behaviour is virtuous--if only "they" would change, everything would be all right. You should remain understanding toward the person bringing the complaint, but "Let's see what you can do that might possibly help this person change his behaviour." You must structure the situation so that the student himself accepts responsibility for engaging in some kind of behaviour that might remedy the difficulty. The student might elect to change the other person's behaviour, tolerate it, or withdraw from it, but the decision and the resulting action must be seen as the student's responsibility.

2. The Problem is Expressed As a Feeling. Problems are usually expressed as descriptions of feeling: "I feel stupid," "I feel unwanted and unloved." "I feel lonely." You encourage the student to describe in detail his emotional sensations, and you listen in such a way that you will be able to describe the problem and the feelings involved to the student with considerable accuracy. This reflecting and clarifying serves two purposes: (a) it guarantees that you have accurately perceived the problem and the feelings so that you can

better assess what needs to be done; and (b) it establishes you as an important person in the student's life, one who is likely to be viewed as a social model. Some students even find that the clear and accurate reflection of their problem is sufficient for them to resolve their own difficulty without further attention.

There are two basic ways of dealing with problems expressed as feelings:

a. Taking action incompatible with undesired feelings of worthlessness, loneliness and inadequacy. Persons with feelings of worthlessness need to engage in different activities until they find some pattern of behaviour that gives them the satisfaction they want. Lonely people need to learn to take the initiative in meeting people. People who feel inadequate need to develop skills, to build some competency so that they excel in at least one area.

b. Establishing more realistic standards for comparing feelings. Building behaviours incompatible with undesired feelings is not sufficient for those people who have set levels of aspiration unrealistically high, and who consider their feelings quite unique and unshared by others. The discovery that feelings of guilt, hostility, hatred, lust, fear, greed, and selfishness, mixed with desires for love, tenderness and warmth are shared by his fellows is often a revealing experience for one who previously thought he was alone in these feelings. You can help by enabling such students and other group members to share their feelings openly so they can accurately perceive the extent to which these feelings are shared. You can help also by bringing such students into closer contact with the real world; helping them take constructive steps to accomplish their highest goals, develop alternative plans if necessary and learn that frustrations and setbacks have always accompanied great accomplishments.

3. The Problem is the Absence of A Goal. Many people do not know what they want; if they knew, they would be able to achieve it, but they are unable to decide on a goal. Such people are said to be purposeless, alienated, other-directed.

You encourage students troubled by the absence of a goal to explore how other people have solved this problem, to experiment constructively with different organizations and causes. This process of exploration must be an active one; the student must try an alternative series of goals with the expectation that eventually he will adopt or construct some goal or combination of goals that will give meaning to his life.

4. The Problem is That the Desired Behaviour Is Undesirable. A student may desire to achieve a goal which you are unwilling to help him reach. Your job in this case is to help him consider the alternatives and to make sure he is aware of all the consequences of each alternative. The final decision must be made by the student based on his own goals and values.

If the student asks you for your opinion saying, "What would you do if you were in my shoes?", you should give a frank recommendation since the request for an opinion is interpreted as a request for information from a person important in his life. However, he must take responsibility for the success of his own decisions. Your responsibility ends when you have done all in your power to help the student learn to anticipate the probable consequences and weigh the values to be gained or sacrificed by each alternative under consideration.

5. The Problem is That The Student Does Not Know His Behaviour Is Inappropriate. People tend to distort events to place themselves in a more favourable light and to justify their own actions. You may be totally unable to determine from a student's account exactly what he should do to overcome his difficulty. You engage in behaviour that will help him to find out exactly what is causing the difficulty. Confrontation techniques might be useful, as might the use of sociometric devices, in which negative opinions are communicated directly to the person concerned. If the student is to make any improvement, he must know what the difficulty is; once the problem is identified, alternative ways of behaving can be learned.

6. The Problem is A Choice Conflict. A choice conflict - two desirable alternatives, both of which cannot be attained, is a problem difficult to translate into behavioural objectives. Your task is to help the student engage in behaviour that will enable him to resolve the conflict. In almost every

choice conflict there are more than two alternatives available; all must be uncovered and considered. Brainstorming by you and the student may turn up possibilities that neither would have thought of alone. You then encourage the student to test the feasibility of each possible alternative. This will usually lead to a desirable solution.

7. The Problem is A Vested Interest In Not Identifying Any Problem. Some students may merely want someone to listen to them talk. You must decide if you wish to have yourself used in this manner. A more constructive approach would be to help the student establish friendships of his own - friends who would listen to him provided he in turn listened to them.

Referral to a Professional

If a student has sought a private interview for help with a personal problem, such as serious marital discord, the matter of commitment needs to be handled very delicately, and the question of follow-up must be treated with respect for the student's family life. In such cases, it is preferable to help the student obtain professional counselling, if this is available.

Arranging and Conducting Counselling Interviews

There are some requirements concerning the arranging and conducting of a private counselling interview that must be observed. First, see that the interview is private. Assure the student that the talk will be in confidence, unless, as in the case of a student whose public behaviour has caused embarrassment, the student should be informed that a report will be made.

Be organized, especially if you have initiated the interview. Have any needed papers or materials on hand. If the student needs specific information that you can foresee, have it available, or know

where you, or he, can get it.

Be informal and relaxed, and try to put the student at his ease. If you have initiated the meeting, tell him immediately why you have asked him to see you. If he has initiated the meeting, ask what you can do for him.

Be as positive as you can. Point out things he has done well, things he can change, and ask when and how he will make the change. Emphasize the present and the future. Talk about what he does or doesn't do - not why.

When the student asks a question, analyze it quickly in your own mind. If it deserves a straight answer, give the answer if you can. If you can't, say so, and volunteer to find the information if you believe this is possible. If he really wants you to do his thinking for him or make a decision for him, deflect his question with another such as "What do you think?" or "What is likely to happen if you do that?" Don't do his thinking or deciding, but don't ever deflect a question that deserves a straight answer. Don't be afraid to say you don't know.

When the interview is nearly over, summarize what has been said so that both parties have a clear understanding of what has been accomplished. If you did much of the talking and the student is now responsible for acting, it may be wise to have him do the summing up so you can be sure he understands and knows what is expected of him. Plan a future contact. This may be informal, as "see you tomorrow", but if the student has committed himself to something specific and you want to discuss his progress, set a future meeting date. This provides him with a deadline so he can plan accordingly. The important thing is to let him know that you will continue to be interested in him.

Be yourself - don't try to be something you're not, but respect what you are. Don't apologize for yourself. You can help the student to learn the things you know. You are offering to do that; don't apologize for not being able to do more. If the student's language is not the kind of language you speak, then speak your own way. Nothing sounds so "phoney" as a coach using slang which is outside his usual vocabulary. Talk the way you normally talk, and let him talk his way.

Be friendly and informal, but don't try to be a "buddy". Your effectiveness as a counsellor depends partly on the influence you exert

as a more experienced person, one who has been entrusted with responsibility. The students expect some rules and standards, and will respect you for providing and upholding an acceptable pattern of behaviour.

Don't say you understand, or use the non-directive "I see" when it is obvious that you don't understand. You can say "Oh?" or "Yes?" with an upward inflection, or say "I'm trying to understand." Don't act as if you approved of something you really don't like at all; if you don't approve of something, say so. In group counselling (which is what much of your coach behaviour actually is), either say what you think or lead the group into constructive criticism.

Take care that you don't imply that everyone else should think as you do. There are many different ways of looking at things, and you wouldn't give up something you believe without good reason. The use of "public criteria" is often a good approach.

If you are tense, afraid and embarrassed, the student will also be tense, afraid or embarrassed. If you can relax and be yourself you will help others to overcome their tension and embarrassment. Behavioural counselling may involve a number of interviews - five or six is not uncommon. The results justify the time and energy invested.

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B. CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT

Briefly stated, the goal of Life Skills training is to have students become increasingly skilled in whatever abilities help them to handle life more effectively. This is a large and difficult task, and there is a relatively short time in which to accomplish it. Since you, as coach, cannot work directly with the attitudes and feelings of a person except as these are expressed in his behaviour, the focus in the Life Skills course is on changing behaviour in order to change feelings and attitudes. The focus is also on the "here and now", the student's present and potential behaviour and skills.

Your role, as Life Skills coach, is to use whatever means you have to deliberately and consciously help students improve in their level of skills performance. This will no doubt involve the deliberate use of reward and punishment with some or all students. It is not enough to say that the students will see the personal benefit of improving themselves; in many cases this is not true. Thus you must identify the types and amounts of consequences and power you can use to see that students fulfill their commitments and achieve their goals.

The technology of contingency management appears complex and unwieldy; many people have a strong negative bias against contingency management. This unfortunate bias is usually based on misinformation or incomplete information. This technology can be used effectively and humanistically with Life Skills students. In order to simplify the technology and correct the misimpression many people have about it we ask now that you read a rather unusual text. Contingency Management in Education and Other Equally Exciting Places, second edition, Behaviordelia, 1971, Kalamazoo, Mich. When you have read this text you will find the notes in the rest of this unit of some help in applying the principles of Contingency Management to the Life Skills course.

Rewards

Events which follow behaviours (i.e., the consequences of the actions) are rewards, provided they increase or reinforce the behaviours. Events can be made rewarding by following them closely with effective rewards.

There are three kinds of rewards important in coaching activities to assist in developing the behaviours necessary for individual skill development and group functioning:

1. Social rewards involve the coach's behaviour - tone of voice, words of praise, giving attention, feedback, smiling, etc. Most coaching is based on the use of social rewards as the immediate consequence for progress.

2. Token rewards are items which are made rewarding through being paired with other rewards - points, stars, trading stamps, poker chips, written promises (IOU's), etc.

3. Activity rewards are behaviours which people like to perform when they get a chance - games, art activities, etc. Any behaviour a person will readily engage in can be used to reward other behaviour he will less readily engage in, simply by requiring the less preferred activity to be performed before the more preferred activity is allowed.

The general procedure in using reward is to make the reward contingent upon the occurrence of the desired or imposed response. If the correct behaviour occurs, the reward is given; if the correct behaviour does not occur, the reward is not given.

Reward Principles

1. Rewarded behaviour tends to be repeated.

Behaviour is rewarding if the results are satisfying or desirable to the student, if there are verbal and other signs of approval from others, if the student gets what he wants from the behaviour, or if he avoids something unpleasant. Behaviour is controlled by giving or withholding rewards.

2. Reward as immediately as possible.

The student must be able to see the relationship between the desired behaviour and the reward. The closer they occur, the more powerful the meaning conveyed.

3. Gradually shape the behaviour.

It is important to make sure that the student can make some approximation to the desired behaviour and receive a reward. He should be rewarded for what he does correctly now, and then be required gradually to perform more of the desired behaviour to get the reward.

Management of the Reward Environment

1. The coach must be objective.

To be objective, you must ask the following questions regarding your behaviour with the student:

- Exactly what is happening at this moment?
- How do I feel about the situation?
- If the student were someone I had never met before and if I were asked to suggest a course of action after observing, what would I suggest?
- Putting aside everything else, how can I help this student achieve his desired goals?

You must also ask youself about the behaviour of the student:

- What is his behaviour at this moment?
- What is the appropriate behaviour for this situation?
- What difference is there between these two?
- Is there any way I can capitalize on his behaviour to guide him in performing the appropriate behaviour? How?

2. The coach must be consistent.

Consistency means absolute constant adherence to the agreement. To the student it means he knows exactly what to expect if he performs the behaviour and, if he does not, he knows what consequences he must face. It means every time, with no exceptions.

3. The coach must create appropriate, agreed upon and clear-cut rules.

A rule specifies the desired behaviour exactly so that performance of it can be rewarded. The student must be able to perform or approximate the behaviour, and he must know exactly what to do and how much of it to do in order to earn his reward.

4. The coach must emphasize correct behaviour.

A positive approach to behaviour change is important in motivating the student. Any positive aspects of his behaviour (and there are always some correct behaviours present) must be found and emphasized, before "constructive suggestions" are offered.

How To Reward

Using rewards effectively is a skilled art. Somehow, by the way in which you behave, you must motivate the students to improve their behaviour and increase their skills. Learning how to reward involves:

1. Getting out of the criticism trap, which consists of thinking criticism works in changing behaviour because the criticized behaviour stops temporarily. In fact, the criticized behaviour is being strengthened, especially when most of the attention a student receives from others is in the form of criticism or punishment. You can escape the trap by providing cues or reminders for yourself to praise more often; by practising (pick a situation where you criticize now, generate an alternative, and use it); and by making it possible to be rewarded for praising more often (usually the student's improvement is the best reward).

2. Learning to communicate emotionally with the student while giving rewards or feedback, learning to use rewards in ways which assure the student that you like him and consider him a worthwhile person.

Most students are, or can be taught to be, responsive to praise, affection and other social rewards. You must identify, study and practise a variety of ways of giving praise, and you must know a variety of activities, both special and everyday, which can be used along with praise for rewarding performance of desired behaviour.

In using praise to reward behaviour, you must describe and praise the behaviour, not judge the student as a whole. "You contributed many good ideas" not "You're smart". If you must remind a student of a mistake or error, find something to praise first. This leaves little doubt of your liking for him, and he is more likely to listen.

Using Rewards To Effect Behavioural Change

One of the problems facing Life Skills coaches involves motivating some students to perform tasks and to learn skills whose desirability is not obvious to them. Two methods, both drawing on the principles of reward discussed earlier, are suggested for overcoming this problem: one is an informal plan for behavioural change, the other is a more formal, structured program of behavioural contracting.

Plan For Behavioural Change

This plan is most effective when the student designs and carries out the plan himself. That is, he identifies and defines a behaviour to change, records it, decides his immediate goal, decides on effective rewards and punishments, records his progress, and evaluates the success of his program. Your role as coach is to motivate him to initiate this procedure, and to help him set up a suitable plan. In this approach, the whole group helps to develop the plan for each student.

1. Defining a behaviour to change.

The group begins with a low-key discussion on the behaviours which make a more interesting and productive group, and those which inhibit group interaction (see Helpful/Harmful Behaviours). You should guide

the group to focus on very specific behaviours, and to identify an appropriate behaviour for each negative behaviour mentioned. The group then conducts a "hot seat" feedback session in which each member receives information on behaviours he needs to improve. Each member then selects one specific behaviour to work on - one which he feels he will have the most success in improving at this time. You should guide the group away from "pie in the sky" plans; they are simply an avoidance of the problem, masked as good intentions. The behaviour must be defined precisely enough to be counted.

2. Recording progress.

Each student sets himself a goal (e.g., to perform the agreed upon behaviour at least "n" times during the day), and keeps a count to determine if he achieved his goal. Thus students can make commitments that they are reasonably sure they can keep. Care must be taken to prevent students from either setting goals too low or trying to change too much at once.

The process of recording is essential to the plan; it avoids arguments about whether or not the goal was achieved, and is, in itself, a motivating force. The student simply marks a piece of paper each time he performs the desired behaviour and at the end of the day, transfers his count to graph paper and plots his progress.

3. Evaluating the plan.

Evaluation involves both an assessment of the progress toward goal achievement and a decision to set a new goal. You, the student and the group all participate. As a result, the student either raises his goal for the present behaviour, or if he has reached an optimum level, he defines another behaviour to work on. The process is cumulative; that is, the student maintains the optimum level of the original behaviour while working on the new.

4. Coach influence and the use of rewards.

The sequence involved in carrying out such a plan is often sufficient to produce behaviour change in many students; the motivational element tends to be built in. However, if the student does not take action and does not fulfill his commitment, the group and you must insist on some

differential consequence for success and effort. If it is available, the first source of influence is group and coach approval (support) and disapproval. Where this is not important enough to the student to cause him to act, a system of reward contingencies must be instituted. To be effective, this must be agreed to by the full group.

For instance, you might try to get the group to agree to giving up all coffee breaks or field trips if each member does not fulfill his commitment. In this event, you must be certain that each student is serious in his commitment and really can achieve it. Thus each individual has a task and a goal, but the reward (the coffee break) is contingent on all members achieving their goals so that the group is rewarded, not individual students. If this approach is used, it must be clearly stated and agreed upon, and it must be followed strictly, with no exceptions. This will build a strong motive for co-operation, group solidarity and mutual help.

5. Using stronger rewards.

For some students, the use of strong, obvious and immediate rewards may also be necessary. Token reward systems are one way you might introduce stronger rewards in the training setting. The rules for planning a token system are:

- Use tokens that can be given quickly and easily.
- Reward frequently in the beginning, and then gradually reward less as the behaviour improves.
- Pair tokens with praise and affection so that these social rewards gain rewarding power. This will enable you to eventually get off the system.

With increased skill, the activity should become either self-rewarding, or lead to better payoffs in the student's life.

Behavioural Contracting

The principles and rules of positive behavioural contracting can be used for the management of relationships between coaches and students. The ultimate objective is to shift to self-management, where the individual assumes the responsibility for his own behaviour.

Behavioural contracts rest on four assumptions:

1. Receiving rewards in interpersonal exchanges is a privilege to be earned rather than a right which is conferred. When this is the case, the contract can be used to structure interactions, and make the expectations of the interactions explicit.

2. The norm of the interpersonal exchange is explicitly agreed upon, such that each person is given an opportunity to be rewarded/helped to the extent that he rewards/helps others. The explicit criteria based on this norm can be used to judge the quality and appropriateness of the student's behaviour.

3. The value of an interpersonal relationship is dependent on the value of the reward/help exchanged. This means that improvements in interpersonal relations can be achieved by directly manipulating the relationships to make them more rewarding/helpful.

4. Rules, contracts, commitments, etc. create freedom in interpersonal exchanges when they make explicit how each person can earn the privileges he wants or expects. These rules, etc. are a necessary condition for freedom in social behaviour; they define both the nature of the privileges and the conditions under which they are maintained.

All behavioural contracts consist of five elements:

1. The contract should state the privileges each member expects to gain from the relationship. The privileges must be behavioural descriptions of rewarding activities which are mediated and controlled by the group.

2. Following a statement of privileges, every contract should include a statement of responsibilities which must be met in order to earn each privilege. All responsibilities chosen must be in balance with the privileges they produce and must be observable by the group members.

3. A system of sanctions or penalties for failure to meet responsibilities must be developed, since it is sometimes more rewarding for the student to ignore his contracted commitments and get outside rewards (not controlled by the group). The provision of sanctions both reduces the likelihood of

contract violations and provides a relationship-preserving response to violations when they do occur.

4. It is also desirable to provide bonuses as additional rewards for prolonged periods of contract adherence. Bonuses help focus attention on positive behaviours so that they will not be overlooked or taken for granted.

5. A fifth element of contracts is a system of monitoring. Interpersonal relations structured by the contract will run smoothly only when each student is made aware of his responsibilities as they arise. By making these exchanges explicit through written monitoring or record sheets, errors are avoided, each student knows where he stands relative to the agreement, and students are cued when to grant privileges.

The rules of contracting are not entirely unknown to the average person (i.e., "First clean up your plate, then you may have your dessert.") There are ten basic rules; the first five refer to the use of reward in contracting, and the second five describe characteristics of proper contracts. The ten rules are the same points covered earlier under Reward Principles and Management of the Reward Environment, as applied specifically to behavioural contracting.

1. The contract payoff (reward) should be immediate, especially early in the program while the student is learning about contracting. The presentation of reward must be contingent only on the adequate performance of the behaviour or skill, and not, for example, on the passage of time.

2. Initial contracts should call for, and reward, small simple-to-perform approximations of the final performance desired. If the performance requested is too precise and too difficult, no amount of reward will help.

3. Experience has shown that it is far more effective to give small frequent rewards rather than a few large ones.

4. The contract should call for, and reward, accomplishment rather than obedience to the coach. Reward for obedience leads only to continued dependence.

5. The performance should be rewarded only after it occurs. This may seem self-evident but, in everyday life, the order of events is frequently reversed.

6. The contract must be fair; the terms on both sides of the agreement must be of relatively equal weight, and the amount of reward must be related to the amount of performance.

7. The terms on both sides of the contract must be clearly and explicitly stated. The student must always know how much performance is expected of him, and what he can expect as a reward.

8. The contract must be honest; that is, one that is carried out immediately, and according to the terms specified.

9. The terms of the contract should be positive, should contribute something to the student's experience, rather than take something away. Negative contracts involve a threat of punishment.

10. Contracting as a method must be used systematically. The laws of behavioural contracting go on working all the time. A reward following a bit of behaviour will strengthen that behaviour whether or not it occurs during training hours.

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C. THE PROCESS OF BALANCED SELF-DETERMINISM TRAINING

Introduction

The process of Balanced Self-Determinism (BSD) training has four main aspects: the role of the coach, the techniques of BSD behaviour training, self-directed development of BSD behaviour and group techniques of BSD behaviour development. In the first, the coach may serve to motivate the student to change, to guard against dangers involved in BSD, to act as a model and prompter for the student as he rehearses new behaviour, and to be a mediator with other significant persons in the student's life. The technique of BSD behaviour training includes specific step-by-step methods for the coach to employ in teaching BSD behaviour. Self-directed development of BSD behaviour is a means whereby the individual learns the concepts and techniques of BSD, sets up his own regimen in consultation with the coach and then assumes the entire responsibility for following the regimen. Finally, consideration is given to how BSD training may be adapted to the group setting.

The Role of the Coach

1. Motivation to Change: After initially determining whether the student's characteristic behaviour is too OD or SD, you must be certain that the student understands fully the consequences of such behaviour. In the case of the OD student this usually is an easy task, since the majority of OD individuals readily recognize themselves as lacking in assertion and wish to overcome the dilemma. If such adequate motivation is not present, you point out conditions in the student's present relationship which will become worse unless he seeks change.

Motivation of the SD person is frequently a somewhat different matter. Although many SD individuals wish to improve their ability to relate effectively to others, it is often more difficult for the SD person to seek help, since he is accustomed to controlling his environment to suit his own needs. Generally, the person who behaves in an SD aggressive manner finds his way into Life Skills as a result of referral by an agency or occasionally out of his own frustration with the inadequacy of his responses.

Usually when suggesting Balanced Self-Determinism to individuals, you speak of the fact that no one has a right to take advantage of another simply on a human being-to-human being level. For instance, as an employer, no one has a right to take advantage of an employee's natural rights to courtesy and respect as a human being. A doctor does not have the right to be discourteous or unfair in dealing with a patient. A lawyer should not feel he can "talk down" to a labourer. Each person has a perfect right to speak his piece even though he may "only have a grade or high school education" or be "from the wrong side of the tracks" or be "just a secretary in a large office." Men are indeed created equal on the human-to-human plane and each has the right of realizing his humanity. You also point out that there is so much more for the student to gain from life by being free and able to stand up for himself, and from honouring the same right for others. By being Balanced Self-Determined he is actually learning to give and take more equally with others, and to be of more service to himself and others.

Another effective motivator is to cite cases of the past quite similar to, or even worse, than the individual with whom you are working. Hearing case descriptions that sound very much like himself, and learning how others then successfully overcame the difficulty often gives the student sufficient hope and courage to seriously apply himself to his training. Generally speaking a person is able to "see himself" in one of these descriptions of others, and as a result, desires to overcome his problem.

Although it may be more difficult for the generally SD individual to admit the negative consequences of his actions, he usually recognizes the reaction of others to his denial of their rights. He reacts internally with acknowledgement and pain when confronted with the alienation his behaviour brings about. If he has sought help, he may, once he feels he can trust the coach, admit his concern and guilt for the hurt he causes others, noting that he simply does not know how to gain his own goals with BSD behaviour. At this point he is an excellent candidate for BSD training.

2. Precautions for the coach: Once the person is well motivated and ready to begin BSD behaviour, you must make certain that the student understands thoroughly the basic principles of BSD. The examples of the differences between BSD and SD are important and should be made clear to him. When you feel the students are ready from a theoretical standpoint, you must decide whether or not they can begin BSD behaviour on their own. These usually are the situationally Other-Determined or situationally Selfish-Determined who, with a small amount of coaxing, are able to begin Balanced Self-Determinism quite successfully.

With the generally Other-Determined and generally Selfish-Determined, however, much more caution is involved and we feel it is best to make very certain that much practice and individual work be involved.

The students' initial attempts at being BSD should be chosen for their high potential of success, so as to provide reward. This point, of course, is important with all beginning students but especially the generally OD and generally SD.

The more successfully one asserts himself, the more likely he is to do so from then on. Additionally, when the individual reports to you an instance of successful BSD behaviour, he obtains added reward. You must indeed be very capable of providing verbal reward for each of the student's successful BSD acts.

Initially then, the student should begin with small BSD acts that are likely to be rewarding and from there proceed to more difficult BSD acts. Ideally each step should be explored with you until the student is capable of being fully in control of most situations. He should be warned against taking it upon his own initiative to attempt a difficult BSD act without special preparation. You also should be careful not to instigate a BSD act where the student is likely to fail miserably, thus inhibiting further attempts.

If the student does suffer a setback, which very well may happen, you must be ready to help him to analyze the situation and to help him regain his confidence. Especially in the early stages, students are prone to mistakes either of inadequate technique or of overzealousness to the point of SD.

Either miscue could cause negative returns, particularly if the other individual, the "acted upon," becomes hostile and highly aggressive. Therefore, you must be prepared to serve as a buffer and help to re-establish motivation.

3. Behaviour Rehearsal, Role-Playing and Modelling: More BSD can be facilitated by practising the intended act before attempting it. Usually it is best for you to be present to offer hints on techniques and to reward, but at times the student can practise with a tape recorder or in front of the mirror or both. You may role-play the student's part in order to demonstrate his inadequate behaviour, showing him his faulty approach and giving a model for improvement. You may also serve as a model for the student in order to demonstrate correct procedure, including non-verbal as well as verbal cues. Life Skills groups are

helpful too, offering support, more ideas on how to approach matters, the modelling benefit gained from watching others, and the sharing of examples of successes and failures by group members.

4. Relationships with Primary Group Members (e.g. parents, spouses): Typically, patterns of OD and SD behaviour have been operational in an individual for a long period of time. The student has well-established patterns of interaction with those significantly close to him, such as family, spouse, and friends. A change in these established relationships is very likely to be quite upsetting to the others involved. Generally speaking, parents are often targets of SD behaviour, especially for independence.

Of course, some people defer to their parents' wishes and commands as long as they are living (because it is the "right thing" to do to respect one's elders, primarily your parents, who sacrificed so much for you, etc., etc.). Many parents believe this same line of thinking and therefore are likely to be quite disconcerted when their child "rebels" with BSD acts. On the other hand, parents who have patterned their lives in response to an SD child could be equally unsettled to find his behaviour changing to BSD even though they have often wished for such a day. Consequently, you can often intervene and talk to the parents to prepare them for what is to come. This intervention can often prevent their reactions from interfering with training, and deeply strained relations between parents and child can be avoided.

Marriage relationships which have been functioning for years based upon the OD or SD actions of one partner are similarily prone to be turned "topsy-turvy" when BSD behaviour commences. If the spouse is not properly prepared, and possibly willing to change to some degree, a marital break-up is a definite possibility. Co-operation from the spouse through one or more conferences with you can help a great deal in "cushioning" the student's change in behaviour.

The Technique of BSD Behaviour Training

When BSD training has been identified by the student and yourself as pertinent to some phase of the "course of action" developed earlier, you are in a position to begin the systematic process of helping the student to learn new ways to respond to previously threatening situations. The application of a sequence of logical steps will improve the student's ability to cope with nearly all such situations as he learns the process of BSD behaviour. (These steps are designed for use on a one-to-one basis with the student. The sections

following them discuss adapting these procedures to self-directed or group settings.)

Step 1. The student re-creates as vividly as possible the scene in which he finds himself ill-at-ease, upset or otherwise functioning poorly. Details of the setting are important to produce in the student the feelings he has in the real situation.

Step 2. The student's response to the situation and the consequences resulting from his behaviour are left open-ended.

Step 3. You and the student now act out the scene, with the student portraying himself, and acting as he would under the circumstances in reality. You, while playing the part of another person, carefully observe the student's behaviour. The use of video-tape recording (or in its absence, audio-recording) is helpful at this point.

Step 4. The student's behaviour is reviewed with him utilizing your observations and recordings. Particular attention is drawn to the ways in which the student's OD and/or SD tendencies manifest themselves (e.g. expressions, actions, mannerisms, speech) and to the positive points in his behaviour. If a video-tape recorder is not available, it is often helpful to re-enact the student's behaviour, to mirror for him his own actions. With some students, it may be useful in the re-enactment to overemphasize certain behaviours in order to make a point (e.g. giving an extra-limp handshake, speaking inaudibly, overacting rudeness). This step should be worked through thoroughly so that the "feedback" is adequate. The student needs to see clearly his inadequate behaviour patterns, and also recognize his strengths.

Step 5. You and the student next consider alternative approaches to the situation. How might the student have handled it differently, more to his own advantage, or less offensively? A thorough discussion of alternatives and their likely consequences is in order at this time. The student should differentiate between OD, BSD, and SD responses.

Step 6. When both agree that this review has made the student aware of how he could more effectively act in the situation, it may be appropriate for him to attempt a BSD response in the actual situation without further practice (Step 11). Generally, however, it is preferable to complete all 14 steps in sequence.

Step 7. Because of the importance of social models in the process of learning new behaviour, you next select one of the more desirable alternatives and take the part of the student, demonstrating the more effective behaviour in the situation. During this procedure, the student should pay careful attention to your actions, noting facial expressions, speech volume and tempo, body movements, gestures, and choice of words. The consequences of your approach should then be discussed, as well as possible ways to improve on your actions.

Step 8. Having examined his own behaviour, considered alternatives, and observed a model of more adaptive action, the student is now prepared to begin trying out for himself new ways of dealing with the problem situation. (If he is unwilling to go on at this point, a repeat of Steps 4, 5 and 7 may be necessary until he is ready to proceed.) It is important for the student to select an alternative, more effective way of behaving in the problem situation. (He may wish to follow your model and enact the same approach. Such a choice is appropriate, but should reflect an awareness on the part of the student that he is a unique person, and he may not find your approach one which he could feel good about adopting for himself). After selecting a more effective alternative behaviour, the student is now to role-play the situation, attempting to act in accord with the new response pattern he has selected. As in Step 3, careful observations of the student's behaviour are made, using available mechanical record aids.

Step 9. This step essentially repeats Step 4; however, at this time the feedback emphasis is on the positive aspects of the student's behaviour. He should be strongly rewarded for the strengths of his performance, encouraged positively to develop weaker areas.

Step 10. Steps 8 and 9 are repeated as often as necessary to "shape" the behaviour of the student - by this process of successive approximations of his goal - to a point wherein he feels comfortable dealing in a self-enhancing manner with the previously threatening situation.

Step 11. The student is now ready to test his new response pattern in the actual situation. Up to this point his preparation has taken place in a relatively secure environment. Nevertheless, careful training and repeated practice have prepared him to react almost "automatically" to the situation. He should thus be reassured if necessary and encouraged to proceed. If he is unwilling to do so, further rehearsals may be needed.

Step 12. The student is encouraged to return, as soon as practical, to you following his attempt, in order to review his effort and the consequences thereof. You should reward whatever degree of success the student experiences, and offer continued assistance.

Step 13. The student is encouraged to repeat such procedures as may be appropriate in the development of the desired behaviour, and to undertake a similar behaviour development program relative to other situations in which he wishes to develop a more adaptive repertoire of responses.

Step 14. As a final step in establishing an independent behaviour pattern, you should help the student to understand the need for on-going self-reward. It is very important for the student, in order to maintain his newly-developed BSD behaviour, that he achieve a system of rewards in his own social environment. He will no longer have the benefit of regular reward from the coach so he must gain rewards for his BSD behaviour from other sources in his life.

For example,the student now knows the good feeling which accompanies a successful BSD act and he can be assured that this good response will continue. Admiration received from others will be another continuing positive response to his growth. You and the student should develop a check list of specific rewards available which are unique to the student's environment.

Although we emphasize the importance of this systematic learning process, it should be noted that no lock-step forced pattern is recommended without consideration for the needs and objectives of the student. You are encouraged to provide a learning environment in which the student may grow in BSD and to carefully avoid "shoving it down his throat."

Group Techniques of BSD Training

The process of BSD behaviour development may be effectively applied in a group setting. With some students this approach may be more effective than the individual one-to-one relationships because of the expanded potential for interaction with others during the training process.

Several specific advantages result from a small group. The OD or SD person typically encounters great anxiety in certain life situations when he is faced with confronting other people in order to assert himself. Learning BSD behaviour in a group provides a "laboratory" of other people with whom to work. Discovering that they share similar problems, each is less "alone." The group must be understanding and supportive, providing a social environment in which each person can be accepted as he is, and thus be comfortable enough to experiment with new behaviour.

With several individuals undertaking BSD training together, there is a broader base for social modelling. Each student sees several others learning to act in a more BSD manner, and each is able to learn from the strengths and weaknesses of the others.

A group provides greater feedback than can an individual coach. The advantage of hearing from several perspectives can speed the behaviour-shaping process for each student.

Social situations involving several people are a frequent source of anxiety for OD or SD people. Work in a group gives a realistic opportunity to face several people and overcome that difficulty in a relatively safe training environment.

A significant disadvantage to be recognized in the use of the small group setting for BSD training is that some students are so worried about their interpersonal contacts that they may be unable to face even a congenial group of others with similar problems. In such cases, of course, individual work is essential, at least until the student feels able to enter a group.

The developmental process spelled out above may be adapted to the group setting simply by involving the group members in the role-playing and feedback processes (Steps 3, 4, 8 and 9) and in the discussion and modelling of alternative behaviours (Steps 5 and 7).

Preparation of the group for working effectively together will depend upon the institutional setting, the skill and attitudes of the coach and the readiness of group members to respond openly and honestly to one another. An atmosphere of trust and concern for one another should grow out of the training process, and the growth toward common objectives may provide sufficient cohesiveness to develop an effective working group. You, acting as model and guide, set the initial tone, and by your example, encourage trust, support and positive regard for each member of the group.

Development of Self-Directed BSD Behaviour

Certain individuals may decide that they **can** instigate BSD acts in their own lives without the help of a coach. The use of the preceding materials in this way is perfectly acceptable, but only with situational OD and situational SD students. One should simply follow the guidelines as presented, being

careful to proceed step-by-step. The importance of the feedback process (Steps 3, 4, and 9) should be recognized and the use of tape recorder, mirror, or other devices should not be overlooked. Possibly the help of a spouse or friend could also be solicited.

It is important to remember to begin with BSD acts where one is somewhat certain of success before proceeding to more difficult ones requiring greater confidence and skill. One should not forget that it is often quite helpful and reassuring to obtain support and guidance from an objective,helping person.

Cautions, Limits and Potential Problems In Using BSD Training

The value of BSD Behaviour to the individual seeking self-direction in his life, and particularly in his interpersonal relationships, is clear. However, it is necessary to recognize some of the potential shortcomings and hazards inherent in BSD actions. Sensitivity is required in taking into account some of these limitations and potentially negative consequences of standing up for oneself.

Although,for most, BSD behaviour will be its own reward, the consequences on occasion may deflate its value. Consider, for example, the young boy who refuses the bully's request to ride his new bike, and finds himself nursing a black eye as a result! His act was perfectly legitimate, but the other person was unwilling to accept the denial of his desire. Therefore, without suggesting that a BSD act be avoided if it appears hazardous, we do encourage persons to consider the probable consequences of their BSD acts. Under certain circumstances, the personal value of BSD Behaviour will be outweighed by the value of avoiding the probable response to that behaviour.

It may be useful to review a number of possible situations in which the potential value of BSD behaviour is weighed against the likely consequences. Each person should be able to choose for himself how he will act. If an individual can act in a BSD manner under given conditions, but chooses not to, then the training goal has been accomplished. If he is unable to act in a BSD manner - i.e. cannot choose for himself how he will behave, but is cowed into OD behaviour or triggered into SD acts - his life will be governed by others and his mental health will suffer.

Potential Adverse Reactions

When facilitating BSD behaviour, negative results can occur. Certain people do react in a disagreeable manner when they face BSD acts from another. Therefore, even if the behaviour is handled properly one may at times still be faced with uncomfortable situations such as the following:

a. Backbiting: After you have acted, the other person involved may be somewhat disgruntled, but not openly. For example, if you see others in line jumping ahead of you and you assert yourself, the person may grumble as he passes you to go to the end of the line. You may hear such things as "Who does he think he is anyway?", "Big deal!" "Big man!" and so forth. The best solution is simply to ignore the childish behaviour. If you do retort in some manner, you are likely to only complicate the situation by rewarding the fact that his words "got to you."

b. Aggression: In this case the other party may become outwardly hostile. Yelling or screaming could be involved, or physical reactions like bumping, shoving, or hitting. Again, the best approach is not to make the condition worse. You may choose to express regret that he is upset by your actions, but you must remain steadfast.

This is especially true if you will have further contacts with him. If you back down on your BSD act, you will simply reward his negative reaction. As a result, the next time you act in a BSD manner, the probability will be high that you will receive another aggressive reaction from him.

c. Temper Tantrums: In certain situations you may act in a BSD manner with someone who has had his own way for a long period of time. He may then react by looking hurt, saying his health is precarious, saying you don't like him, crying and feeling sorry for himself.

d. Psychosomatic Reactions: Actual physical illness may occur in some individuals if you thwart a long-established habit. Abdominal pains, headaches, and feeling faint are just a few of the possibilities. To reiterate, however, you should choose to be firm in the BSD act, recognizing that the other person will adjust to the new situation in a short time. You should also be consistent in your BSD act whenever the same situation recurs with this individual. If you are inconsistent in asserting your rights, the other person involved will become confused. Most likely he or she will eventually just pay no attention to any of your BSD acts.

e. Over-Apologizing: On rare occasions after you have acted in a BSD manner, the other party involved will be overly apologetic or overly humble to you. You should point out his behaviour to him. If he seems to be afraid of you or overly deferential toward you, you should not take advantage of him. You could help him develop more BSD behaviours for himself.

f. Revenge: If you have a continuing relationship with the person to whom you have acted in a BSD manner, there is the chance that he may seek revenge. At first it might be difficult to see what he is attempting to do, but as time goes on his taunts will become quite evident. Once you are certain that he is trying to make your life miserable, you should squelch his actions immediately. A recommended method is to take him aside and confront him directly with the situation. Usually this is enough to get him to cease his revengeful tactics.

Choosing Not To Act In A BSD Manner

Choice is the key word in the BSD process. As long as you know in your own mind (from previous successful BSD encounters) that you can act in a BSD manner, you may decide not to do so in a given instance. The following are some circumstances where one may choose not to act in a BSD manner.

a. Overly Sensitive Individuals: On occasion, from your own observations, you may conclude that a certain person is unable to accept even the slightest BSD act. When this is apparent, it is much better to resign yourself to this fact rather than chance it. Although there are over-sensitive types who use their apparent weakness to manipulate others, we are all aware that there are certain individuals who are so easily threatened that any little disagreement causes them to explode, either inwardly or outwardly (thus hurting others). You could avoid contact as much as possible, but if you must be around someone of this type, there are alternative responses. One is to accept him as he is and cause no friction, if such is feasible. If not, and he does cause your life to be miserable, you may wish to use Wolpe's technique of "Lifemanship". This technique allows you to become free of another person's control of you by manipulating his vulnerability.

b. Redundance: Once in a while the person who takes advantage of your rights will notice, before you get a chance to assert yourself, that he has done so. He will then remedy the situation in an appropriate way. Obviously, you should not wait for an extended period of time wishing that the other person

will notice. Also, you should not hesitate to act if he fails to make the amends you feel should reasonably be made. If you see, on the other hand, that the person recognizes what has happened, it is not appropriate on your part to then pipe up and assert yourself.

c. Being Understanding: Now and then you may choose not to act in a BSD manner because you notice that the person is having difficulty, otherwise, your rights would not be taken advantage of. An example is when someone you know well is "off" or having a rare bad mood. In this case, you may choose to overlook things that may be going wrong between you, or postpone a confrontation to a more productive time. (Caution: It is easy to use "not wanting to hurt the other fellow's feelings" as a rationalization for OD behaviour when BSD action would be appropriate. If you find yourself doing this more than occasionally, you should carefully examine your real motives.)

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* Recommended for supplementary reading.

UNIT VII

ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS COACHING SKILLS

A. ROLE-PLAYING

Definitions

A role is a performer's part in a play. It includes a number of behaviours, attitudes, expectations, motives and feelings used in a given situation. Demonstrating the behaviours and actions of a role by a model or "role competent" person is role-modelling. Individuals learn to take a particular role by imitating the model; in role-playing they act out roles in order to learn new behaviours and attitudes.

Role-Playing Theory

Two basic approaches to role-playing are the structured or planned and the unstructured or spontaneous.

In planned role-playing the coach may assign a specific situation and a specific problem within the situation to be role-played; he may provide participants with full instructions on what to say and do in order to control the content and process of the exercise, and he may pass out prepared observer sheets for non-participants to fill in. Role-playing is thus structured according to a plan. A spontaneous role-play may be based on the "here and now" or any meaningful problem selected by the group. Some planning on the spot may be necessary, but there may be little guidance on specific content.

The coach may use planned role-playing effectively to involve students in the instructional process and to give them practical experience in the problem situation. People learn better through experience and participation than by discussion of a principle or technique. The goal of a planned session of role-playing may be to explore some aspect of problem-solving or to provide training in particular techniques. In this way students can compare

various approaches to a problem and learn to imitate the most successful and suitable for themselves.

Planned role-playing may include various aspects of learning:

1. Learning by doing. Students practise speech and action, they experiment, and they learn by trial and error.

2. Learning through imitation. Students can pattern their own behaviours and approaches on those of a successful "role competent" model.

3. Learning through observation and feedback. While some students are role-playing, others act as observers to provide feedback to players in critique sessions after the role-play. In the ensuing discussion, both role-players and observers can benefit by identifying specific actions in the role-play which need to be modified.

4. Learning through analysis. From observation and discussion of actions and approaches in role-playing, students can learn to make a more careful analysis of the forces at work in both training and real-life situations. From the ideas, behaviours and attitudes expressed in a role-play, students should become able to draw out certain systematic principles of human behaviour and problem solving which they can apply to their own relations with others.

The coach or role-playing director encourages analysis by providing guides for observers to comment on the performance of players in role-playing specific situations. He leads the discussion and helps to draw out various interpretations and judgements from the group, to evaluate the behaviour and skills of the players, and to suggest improvements.

With the exception of analysis, spontaneous role-playing includes all the learning possibilities of planned role-playing, and it includes other positive aspects, chiefly the opportunity for participants to discover new modes of action and to reduce their inhibitions and self-consciousness in dealing with others. In spontaneity training the learner discovers new approaches and new behaviours; he learns to assess a particular situation and to react accordingly; he is urged to experiment and try new methods, without depending only on behaviour patterns from past experiences. In the process, he can discover new things about himself, his own shortcomings and his unrealized potentialities.

In summary, spontaneous role-playing promotes innovation, discovery and relaxed spontaneity at the same time as it provides an opportunity for learning by doing, by imitation and by observation and feedback, but critical evaluation and analysis cannot play such an important part as in planned role-playing. However, a clear line between the two aspects cannot be drawn. Spontaneous sessions may include a large element of structure, and even carefully planned role-playing may need a degree of innovation and spontaneity to make it successful. (It should also be noted that the coach or director of role-playing must always work within his own structured overall plan, which is flexible enough at the same time to allow him to respond freely to the training needs of the students.) The Life Skills course uses spontaneity training to help withdrawn and shy students to relax, lose some of their fears, and become more involved with the rest of the group.

Some Features of Role-Playing

Enactment is the interaction or performance of two or more people in a role-playing situation. Possibilities for role-playing situations range through all aspects of life. A student may at one time play himself, another real person or an imagined person; he may play the part of a supervisor or the person supervised, the interviewer or the person interviewed, the typical boss or the typical subordinate, or any particular role assigned by the coach.

To be successful, role-playing must be psychologically real. A good actor is one who can put himself into a role so completely that he seems to be using real feelings and reactions, even though the situation is imaginary and designed only for training purposes. Not all role-playing, of course, needs a completely simulated situation; it can be based on the genuine experience of one of the students or on a "here and now" situation which comes up in training and lends itself to immediate action.

A third feature is that good role-play, even planned and structured, requires some latitude for the participant to innovate and experiment with a variety of responses and reactions. Dialogues should not be entirely controlled; if role-players have to read or memorize a script, the spontaneity is lost and the role-play becomes a skit.

Role-Playing Procedures

A number of procedures can be specified to help coaches to prepare for and conduct role-playing in a training group, both for planned and spontaneous role-playing.

Planned Role-Playing

Planned or structured role-play has many features in common with case studies; both are based on a particular situation which illustrates one or more principles that need to be learned. In both, the writer must gather facts and incidents in order to describe the situation and the relationships to be illuminated. The big difference between them is that the raw material for the case study is written, but in role-play the material is provided through an interpersonal exchange between the role-players. A coach may follow these steps in preparing for and conducting role-playing:

1. Identify the problem area. The coach must relate his training objectives to the kind of problems his students have. Then he can pick specific situations which are relevant. They may concern the police, a job interview, a family relationship, or any of the life problems which arise in a Life Skills course.

2. Collect information. This includes the specific situation, the relationships of the players, typical incidents to be played, attitudes to be expressed, and topics to be discussed.

3. Set specific objectives. The coach should consider what he wants his students to learn from the role-play, whether it is just the practice in speaking in front of a group, understanding the role of the characters they play, learning something from the dynamics of the role-playing situation itself, or some other goal.

4. Write out the details. The coach must be prepared to describe the setting and background for the role-play situation; to brief the participants as to the nature of their roles, such things as positions assumed, relationships between participants and attitudes to be expressed; to provide guides to assist observers to analyse the role-playing enactment; and to lead a discussion in which the key points of the role-play are clarified.

5. Prepare the participants. The coach should identify the problem area, describe the situation and the relationships of the people in the roles to be played, and in discussion with the group relate the subject of the role-play to their day-to-day work. Discussion will allow both players and observers to gain more from the enactment and post-enactment analysis and evaluation. Then specific instructions for each role are given to the role-players.

6. Perform the role-play. The players go through the enactment, speaking and acting only within their assigned roles.

7. Discuss and analyse the role-play. Both observers and role-players should make comments and give their reactions to the role-play in an attempt to isolate the issues, behaviours, feelings and relationships portrayed. From this analysis they can explore alternate courses of action, they can develop a new insight into the factors underlying the specific problem or concept under study, and they can generalize to broader principles of human relations.

Spontaneous Role-Playing

Spontaneous role-playing may require less structure and formal preparation than planned or structured role-playing, but the coach must still have his objectives and strategy well thought out in advance. His main objective will be to help individuals in the group, and the group as a whole, to become less inhibited and to respond more effectively to a given problem; he should not need to give written instructions.

Spontaneous role-playing can be developed in three stages:

1. The warm-up. In discussion, the coach and the group must identify a problem area which is timely, topical and significant to the members at their stage of development. The coach encourages group members to express themselves freely and to explore differences of attitude or point of view without making personal critical comments or value judgements on what is right or wrong at this stage. Gradually, within the context of the situation under discussion, the students will get to know each other better in a climate in which experiment and testing of ideas, opinions and feelings are not only acceptable but are encouraged.

2. The enactment. At some stage of the warm-up, as group members become more involved, the coach may suggest that further exploration or experiment be made through role-playing. He may merely suggest that particular people should try to gain a better understanding of a particular issue by exploring it in action, without using the actual term "role-playing". For example, somebody may say, "I think the police are too strict when they pick a guy up just because he's loafing on the street corner." Other members of the group may disagree or try to explain what vagrancy means. At the right time, the coach may suggest that one person pretend to be a policeman and another make a complaint to him about "picking up guys who aren't doing anything wrong". A variety of points of view can be explored with different people playing the part of the policeman, the arrested person, and another person disagreeing with the policeman's action. During the role-playing the coach can suggest a variety of techniques (described below) which contribute to increased spontaneity and a deeper insight into the issue.

3. The final discussion. Discussion after a spontaneous role-play need not be so formal and analytical as after a planned role-play, but the coach should bring out in discussion the opinions and attitudes expressed in the role-play. This may help group members to identify with the people represented in the role-play, to understand and accept their feelings and attitudes, and to accept new modes of behaviour for themselves. The coach should lead the observers away from criticism or evaluation of the performance of the role-players; such judgement may inhibit their spontaneity in future sessions. However, participants should be encouraged to tell what they learned about their own behaviour while playing a role.

Some typical questions for discussion are: What responses can one or should one make in this situation? Can you understand the attitude of the person represented in the role-play? What did the policeman feel? The arrested person? The person criticizing the police? Do you understand their attitudes and actions better after role-playing the part or after watching somebody else play it? What can you learn about your own behaviour and attitudes from such a role-play?

Such post-enactment discussion may lead to further role-playing in which participants may want to practise and incorporate new behaviours into their own repertoire of ways of dealing with others.

Some Techniques for Role-Playing

A number of successful techniques which can be used in both planned and spontaneous role-playing are described below:

Role Reversal

Role reversal means the switching of roles or positions in role-playing, particularly when there is a certain polarity involved as, for example, between a husband and a wife, a parent and a child, an employer and an employee or a policeman and an arrested person. The technique forces role-players to look at both sides and to try to understand why people have opposing views; it helps to clarify feelings, perceptions and attitudes on both sides. The switch of roles may be made in the middle of an enactment, or an enactment may be repeated immediately with the players reversing their roles. A reversal may even be made several times during an enactment to help participants to gain greater flexibility and insight.

Some practical examples may illustrate the range of possibilities for using the technique. As the coach gains experience he will be able to think of many more. The coach may say:

1. "Trade places (and roles) just to see how it feels."

2. "You have just shown how the supervisor acts; now try to be the employee so that you can see the problem from both sides." (This is very effective if you are working with an employer, supervisor, parent, etc. in real life. Get them to role-play an opposing role for a change.)

3. "One way to learn to understand the other fellow's point of view is to take his part. Why don't you change places and try it?"

4. (After one player has pointed out that another has not interpreted a role correctly.) "Okay, you take his part and show us how you think it should be done."

Role reversal builds flexibility and spontaneity, particularly for people whose stereotyped patterns of response need to be broken, and it can increase insight and sensitivity to the attitudes and feelings of others who may have opposing opinions. Role reversal may also help to clarify technical content. It may often happen that a certain group member has more information about a situation than anybody else. By role-playing both sides of an issue, he may be able to clarify it for all.

Doubling

Participants in role-playing, through nervousness or lack of imagination, may stick to superficial and trite responses which really do not approach the heart of the issue and which may hinder effective communication between them. In such cases, the coach or an assistant trained for the purpose sits behind the speaker and acts as his "double" to express some of the feelings and attitudes that the speaker may think but not say. For example, the player may say in an employer-employee role-play, "Yes, I like my job very much." The double might interrupt and add, "...but I wish you wouldn't be so bossy." On the other side, the employer may say, "I'm glad to have you working for me," and the double might add "...but you do waste an awful lot of time."

Group members will soon learn to take the part of the double. There can be a lot of fun in role-playing, as well as serious value, in using doubles in a great variety of role-playing situations. Doubling does help to bring unexpressed feelings and points of view to the surface, and it may give participants a much deeper insight into unspoken expression behind polite conversation.

Soliloquy

A soliloquy is the act of talking out loud to oneself. To ensure that all observers understand the underlying feelings and attitudes in the relationship between two role-players, the coach may interrupt the role-play and ask one of the players a number of questions about how he feels and what he thinks of what is happening. The player soliloquizes, or expresses his thoughts verbally, to give listeners a better insight into his reactions to the other role-player and to the situation in the role-play. Then the role-play continues.

For example, if two students are role-playing a job interview, the coach may interrupt the action to ask the applicant, "How do you feel about the interview?". The applicant might say, "I think he is asking me some unfair questions." The coach may then urge the applicant to explain why he considers the questions unfair and what his personal reaction to the interviewer is.

Multiple Role-Playing

In multiple role-playing the whole class breaks up into groups of two to perform role-playing exercises simultaneously. Generally the students should be well briefed, either orally or with written instructions, concerning the background of the situation, the roles they should take, and the purpose of the exercise. The technique works well when the lesson topic deals with a situation in which only two people are needed. For example, after a whole group has seen the skills of employment interviews modelled and practised by a number of students, the coach may assign some of the students to act as employers and the rest as applicants.

To make a bit of a game out of it, applicants can be supplied certain specific information about age, education, hobbies, and past work experience. Then in the post-enactment discussion the "employers" can compare the information each has collected to determine who has used the most effective questioning techniques, and these should be demonstrated to all. Finally, there can be a role-reversal to allow students more practice in the development of those particular skills. The approach in this example may be especially pertinent to the "mini-questioning" course contained in one of the Life Skills lessons.

Role Rotation

In certain Life Skills lessons, every member of the group should be given the opportunity to role-play a specific problem in a given situation. For example, in Life Skills lessons on getting out of a money trap, every student will need to practise strategies for dealing with persistent salesmen. The coach may use role rotation to give each person an opportunity in turn to respond for a few minutes to another person selected to take the role of the salesman. If each "customer" is asked to use a different defensive strategy, a whole range of possibilities is presented for students to draw from for real life use.

Other Techniques

A few other techniques which may sometimes be used in special training situations may be noted briefly:

Monodrama is a type of role-playing in which one speaker plays both or all parts. He may move from chair to chair or from side to side to indicate which person is supposed to be speaking. This technique can help to make a person aware of both sides of an issue and at the same time make him more flexible in role-playing.

In multiple doubling, two or more people may act at the same time as doubles for speakers in a role-playing enactment. Each gives his own view of what he considers to be the unspoken attitudes and feelings of the speaker. This technique broadens the analysis of any situation to open up more of what may be under the surface.

The mirror technique is used when a person in the group is used to substitute for another member who is reluctant to take part in role-playing. The shy person can watch the proceedings and see his image in the "mirror" of another person's performance.

Group role reversal requires members of the group to take the role of some other member in the group and try to express the other's opinions and attitudes on a particular issue or problem. This technique is especially useful in the Life Skills course where people have to work together for an extended time and ought to become aware of each other's attitudes and feelings. In discussion and analysis after the role-play, the perceptions that they have of each other can be challenged and clarified.

Role-Playing in Skills Training

Role Modelling

Any individual, particularly those in prominent or prestigious positions, may become a model in someone's eyes whether he wants to or not; he may not even know he is serving as a model. This suggests that persons can demonstrate wrong or negative behaviour without meaning to do so. Coaches and other staff must be aware of this situation.

Selecting Behaviours to be Modelled

When a model is used to foster imitation, it must be made clear precisely what it is that the students are to do, how well they should be able to do it, and under what conditions it should be done. The behaviour to be imitated may be presented to the students by a model, by forced interaction through role-play, through arranged situations in which the desired behaviour is made very obvious, through a film or video-tape, or other means. In the case where it is desirable to stop the student from doing particular behaviour, or to have him do less of it, the modelling must be concentrated on the new behaviour to be substituted, and the unwanted behaviour avoided.

Rewarding students for successful practice and making use of similarities between students and the model, will encourage imitation.

Ensuring Attention to the Model's Performance

A contract between coach and students helps the students to accomplish their goals. The coach and students should negotiate an agreement about what they should be able to do regarding task skills and human relation skills. This contract should make clear what each can

expect of the other, and what sequence of steps the students will be expected to master. In making the contract, the coach must know what the students already know about the things they are expected to learn, what they can already do well, and how much they want to learn and understand other parts of the role. The contract can then be used to highlight exactly what it is the model does that they are expected to imitate.

Cue Discrimination

The coach must be able to define, first for himself, then for the students, the exact cue to which the model is responding when modelling for the students to imitate. A "cue" is some aspect of a situation which brings forth a particular response, and which determines whether the response is appropriate at that time and situation. The cue, then, is that feature which elicits a particular response in a variety of situations.

Models must respond consistently to a particular cue. Two inconsistencies to be guarded against are: responding to a given cue in different ways on different occasions, and telling students to respond one way to a given cue but behaving differently in response to the same cue.

Students must know what behaviours they are to acquire; this may be accomplished by directing their attention to appropriate models. They must know when to engage in these behaviours; this involves cue discrimination. Finally, students must have the opportunity to practice the behaviour successfully. Modelling requires repetition - the cue must be presented in a variety of situations so the students can learn to identify and respond appropriately in each set of circumstances.

Chief Uses of Role-Playing in the Life Skills Course

Role-playing is an effective technique in:

1. Diagnosis: to find out how students are likely to act in

certain situations, so that they and the coach can better determine the content of the learning contract.

2. Rehearsal: to practice for coming events in order to be better prepared to handle them skillfully. The student should insure that the elements in the role-play and real life are identical or very similar and that the role-play is designed to enable the students to transfer the learning to other situations.

3. Problem Solving: to examine a problem and practice alternate solutions.

4. Modelling: to watch and imitate someone (the model) do something correctly. Imitation works as a way of learning new behaviours if there is some eventual reward to the learner for imitating the behaviour.

5. Attitudinal Change: to change the attitudes of students toward people with whom they disagree, dislike, do not understand, etc. There is considerable evidence that "role reversal" is an effective technique for producing attitudinal and behavioural change.

6. Self-Awareness: to help the students become more aware of how others see them, both to increase their self-awareness and their ability to deal more effectively with others, based on their understanding of how others view them.

Timing of the Role-Play

Correct timing of the role-play is crucial to effectiveness. Students are most likely to be motivated to imitate those behaviours of a model which they can see as being useful to themselves in the foreseeable future. If the role-play is a simulation, the closer in time it takes place to the actual event the greater the probability that the role-play will be effective in producing learning that will be used.

Sequencing the Role-Play

Sequencing the role-play involves a pattern of demonstration (by the model), private or semi-private (sub-groups) practice with video-tape feedback, practice in full group with video-tape recording as part of the feedback, and finally, improvisations containing the newly acquired behaviour. Trainees should be encouraged to improvise variations of the behaviour for different situations; this increases their commitment to the behaviour and the probability that they will voluntarily use the learning in their own behaviour outside the learning situation.

All the foregoing principles can be adapted to individual and informal role-playing in the course of one-to-one counselling.

Starting the Role-Play

Before starting the role-play, the coach must insure that the students are ready for it; moving students into full group performances too quickly can inhibit learning and lead to non-productive anxiety. The participants should know each other well and have a friendly trusting interaction. The coach should emphasize the safety factor in role-playing - that errors are not "wrong", but offer a chance for change that may not be possible in real life. The coach should describe the situation of the role-play in detail, and suggest a general framework for the action that is to ensue. He should praise positive aspects of the performance and encourage the group to do likewise before offering critical comments. Students should be encouraged to play those roles that are familiar to them and close to their roles in real life, and they should be involved in selecting the roles they are to play.

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B. QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES

Communication is an essential part of any learning situation. A great deal of communicating is done by asking questions. Questioning sometimes implies doubting, but it always means requesting information for purposes of gaining knowledge, seeking clarification, establishing facts, evaluating, or perhaps just satisfying curiosity.

The coach in his roles of motivator, planner, group discussion leader, instructor, counselor, evaluator, is faced with the challenge of making learning more effective and meaningful. To do this, it is necessary for both coach and student to develop questioning techniques to facilitate discussion and free expression of feelings and ideas.

Cognitive Purposes of Questioning

As a means of directing and stimulating discussion, questioning is a fundamental technique for the Life Skills coach. The following are some of the main purposes for which questions are used:

1. When used early in the session or as part of pre-session preparation, they stimulate the thinking of the members and help to creat motivation for learning.

2. Well formulated questions virtually guarantee mental activity on the part of each individual.

3. Well designed questions will help to accumulate data and develop subject matter.

4. During the presentation or discussion, questions provide a means of evaluating the progress of the group toward understanding the material.

5. Questions provide a means of determining a student's knowledge and a check on progress for the participants themselves.

6. Questions provide an effective method of clarification of the two-way communication during a discussion.

7. Questions provide the coach with a powerful means of control whereby he can change the trend of discussion, put a limit on it, or terminate the discussion.

Types of Questions

The most common types of questions are the leading, the factual, the problem, and the attitudinal questions.

1. Leading. Leading questions are used to assist the student in thinking through the right answer. Leading questions help the student recall material he does know. Occasionally the coach, finding that a student is groping for the right answer, may ask him a series of questions to direct his attention to information he knows but is not using in answering a question. Such a series of questions, although suggesting the answers, are valuable in many situations because they cause the student to think through the problem and solve it more or less on his own. This has value when used skillfully because it builds up the student's confidence and gives him practice in using appropriate facts and theories to solve problems. Occasionally the leading question is used in a Life Skills situation to help the awkward student, thus saving him embarrassment in front of the group. Eventually, of course, the student must be able to find the right answers without the help of leading questions, but leading questions are very useful in the early phases of training in the application of theory to practical problems.

> Example: "To get to the City Welfare Office from here, would you head North or South?" "All right, what street would you walk down?" "How many blocks would you walk before you had to turn?" "Which way would you turn?"

2. Factual. The factual question is one in which the student is asked to give the why, when, where and what of a situation. It is more significant to apply facts and principles, of course, than merely to memorize them. However, some factual questions are appropriate at any phase of the training program. Factual questions are more common than others because they are much easier to ask and it is much easier to

decide whether the answer is right or wrong.

Example: "What are the cross-streets on which the City Welfare Office is located?"

3. Problem. The problem question is used to stimulate and challenge the student. The question may be used to set up a situation involving a number of factors and perhaps some controversial elements. This type of question challenges the student to make sound application of knowledge to specific problems. This type of question is the most significant and is the real measure of understanding.

Example: "How would you direct someone to the City Welfare Office?"

4. Attitudinal. This type of question is used to bring out the feelings of the student.

Example: "How do you feel about going to the City Welfare Office?"

Forms of Questions

There are two general forms of questions: the "narrow," and the "broad."

1. The Narrow Question. This form of question is one that can be answered with a "yes," or "no" response: e.g., "Did you find this material interesting?". Generally speaking, a narrow question should be avoided, because it does not invite discussion and it fails to indicate what or how the student is thinking. When it is used, the narrow question should be followed by: "Why?' or, "How?" or, "Where?", so that the person replying is required to explain his views.

2. The Broad Question. This form requires elaboration or

exploration: e.g., "What do you think of this case?". Broad questions take one of two forms: the Direct Question or the Overhead Question.

a. The Direct Question. The coach poses a question and then, after a pause, calls on someone by name and asks him to answer it. A direct question can serve a number of purposes. It can speed up or slow down the discussion. It is an effective "gatekeeping" technique, being used to cut off an over-talkative person or to draw out the quiet person. A direct question can be employed to break up side discussion or to capture the attention of an inattentive person. Direct questions should be used sparingly, otherwise the discussion will turn to a question and answer period between coach and students. Another disadvantage of the direct question is that it tends to discourage continued creative thinking of the other participants; once the question has been passed "directly" to one member of the group, the others are "off the hook" and need not necessarily continue to search for an answer.

b. The Overhead Question. This technique involves asking a question of the group as a whole without mentioning anyone by name: e.g., "What have we learned from this case? Let us take a minute to think about this question. Then I will call on someone to start the ball rolling and give us his impressions." The instructor who uses this type of questioning can depend on one thing - that pause for reflection will be a most thought-provoking minute for all participants. The overhead question has many advantages if used skillfully. It stimulates mental activity, starts discussion, and brings out different opinions. Coaches must acquire expertise in developing and using broadly stated overhead questions.

Characteristics of Good Questions

Good questions usually have the following characteristics.

1. Challenge. Questions should cause the student to THINK: to relate, compare, organize, evaluate, and to draw inferences and conclusions. They should challenge him to apply knowledge rather than

merely repeat facts. The questions should not be so easy that the answers are obvious to most students.

> Example: "It is obvious that Harry likes to work with John. What do you think some of the reasons are?"

2. Brevity. Questions should include only the words needed to express the problem, yet be complete enough to eliminate possibility of misunderstanding.

> Example: "So Harry likes working with John. Why, do you suppose?"

3. Clarity. Questions should be stated in simple, straightforward language. They should be designed to measure understanding of the subject, not knowledge of English.

4. Relevance. Questions should be asked with a definite purpose in mind. Trick or catch questions should be avoided.

5. Emphasis on Major Points. Questions should be built around the fundamental material in the lessons and should be asked at the proper place in the lesson to emphasize key points.

How to Use Questions

Good thought-provoking questions are not easy to construct, and their preparation requires more time than is usually available to the coach during the session. It is therefore sound practice to prepare questions on key points in advance of the lesson. One method is to identify the major or basic points to be put across in the lesson, write out comprehensive questions, and incorporate them at the proper place in the lesson plan. In using the questions during the class, the coach should be able to state them with reasonable accuracy from memory, after a glance at the question noted on the lesson plan. These carefully prepared questions should not take the place of questions which may be asked on the spur of the moment whenever the coach feels that a question is appropriate. They should, however, provide a satisfactory outline around which impromptu questions may be asked. Because words

do not mean the same thing to all people, it is useful to try your questions out on someone else before the lesson.

Skillful use of questions comes with practice. However, a few basic ideas on their use can be set forth as guides. For most questions, and especially for those prepared in advance around major points in the lesson, a definite procedure for asking questions should be followed. The broadly stated, overhead question yields the greatest returns in student participation. This procedure requires mental participation on the part of all students and avoids the confusion that may result if the question is handled in a more informal fashion.

Some effort should be made to fit the question to the individuals concerned. Because individuals in a normal group will vary considerably in ability, and because it is a basic principle of coaching to recognize and provide for individual differences, it is appropriate to give the most difficult questions to the most advanced students. Probably it is undesirable to indicate which you consider to be the most difficult, but a recognition of individual abilities and some effort to take this into consideration is desirable.

Student answers should be carefully evaluated, so that the individual understands how much of the correct answer he was able to provide. Since individuals do not necessarily attach the same meaning to a statement, the coach may have to pursue the answer in such a manner as to leave no doubt in the student's mind.

Do not repeat your own questions. This practise encourages inattentiveness. Should a student request repetition, ask one of the other students to repeat the question. This general principal presumes that your question was properly phrased initially.

Managing the Group Through Questions

Handling Questions Directed to the Coach

The main purpose of a discussion is to have the group members come

up with a variety of views based on thinking through the issues that have been raised. Never discourage a genuine question, however stupid it may seem to you. There is an old saying: "for every question asked there were six others who wished to ask it". In any event the fault may well be yours. Any discouragement on your part may close off all questions.

1. Some useful tips are:

   a. Encourage and support good questions. "That's a good point" or "That's a good question" or "Thank you - I forgot to mention that."

   b. If the question is not connected with the lesson but appears to be sincere, give a short answer. If it is a "Red Herring," smile and say it is a question you would like to discuss with him out of class.

   c. If you DO NOT know the answer say so; DON'T BLUFF. Always find out the answer and let the group know later, or admit "I don't know the answer" and ask "How could YOU find out?"

2. Frequently, participants will become impatient and try to take a short cut by directing a question to the coach. They may be quite genuinely interested in hearing his opinions, but the wise discussion leader knows that he must avoid this pitfall. If he decides it would be better to have the group come up with their own answer, he can resort to one of the following methods of handling the situation:

   a. The Reverse Question. When this method is used, the instructor throws the question back to the person who asked it and invites him to give his own opinion first.

   b. The Relay Question. Instead of reversing the question, the coach can redirect the question to another participant or pose it as an overhead question for all to consider. This ensures that all students pay attention. Overuse of this technique, however, becomes a bore to students - they may even get the impression you don't know the answer and are fishing for help.

Handling the Over-Talkative Person

It should not be assumed that the person who continually has something to say is not a good contributor to the progress of a group discussion. He is often an invaluable asset to get the interaction going, and he can have the effect of stimulating the other members of the group. But he can also monopolize the time; others may come to rely on his responding, and feel they need not put forth an effort. The skilled coach needs to have ways of controlling this type of person without losing him as a productive contributor. Here are several ways of doing this:

1. If he has been "volunteering" to answer most of the overhead questions, switch to direct questions for a while.

2. At the first lull in his comments, cut in with a direct question to someone else or with an overhead question to the rest of the group.

3. Avoid looking at him when posing an overhead question.

4. If some of his arguments or comments are unsound and are distracting or annoying to the group, try to draw him out on a limb and let the group take it from there. The group will probably be reluctant to do this and will look to you for some sort of guidance. For instance you might say, "How do the rest of you feel about that? . . . Harry?"

Handling the Quiet Person

The technique used with a non-talkative group member should depend on the reason for his lack of participation. If he is shy, a direct question may serve as a means of "breaking the ice". In doing this, however, the coach should make sure that he does not embarrass the silent person to whom the question is directed. As a first attempt to draw him out, therefore, the question should be of the closed type. This will enable the recipient to respond with a "yes" or "no" answer. A second technique for drawing the quiet person into the discussion involves the coach deliberately arranging to poll the group - i.e., to ask each one what he thinks.

Example: The coach might say, "At this point there seems to be a wide

variety of opinions on the best solution to this problem. Why don't we take a minute or two to see what each member of the group thinks. Let's start with you, John. What do you think should be done?" In using this method, the coach should be careful not to start the poll by calling on the quiet person first.

Handling a "No Response" Situation

Sometimes a broad question, direct or indirect, fails to elicit a response. Under these circumstances what should the coach do? Should he permit an indefinite period of silence? Should he ignore the situation and turn to other topics? Should he try to "dig" until the group members begin to respond to the question? Or should he give the answer himself? How he decides to handle such a problem would depend on the circumstances. But as a general rule, the coach will want to pursue the question until someone in the group "picks up the ball and starts to run with it. One way of handling a "no response" situation is to start again by rephrasing the question. Maybe it's a matter of breaking the question down into smaller questions. A question should not be classified as a "no-response" question until PLENTY of time has been allowed for thinking of an answer.

Example: Let's assume the group is discussing the relationship between an employer and an employee and the question "What should the employer do under the circumstances?" fails to arouse a response. The coach might then break it down by saying "Well let's look at it this way. What do you think the employee expects the boss to do?"(When this question has been explored the coach poses the next question.) "What action would you take if you were the employer?" There is another way of handling the "No response" situation. After waiting for a while, the coach might pick out someone in the group whom he feels sure would have something pertinent to say. He can then redirect the question to this person and encourage him to comment. For example "John? From your wide work experience you must have some definite ideas on this subject. What exactly are your views?"

Keeping On The Track

It is not usually good practice to jump on individuals or the group at the moment the discussion appears to have gone off the track. Experienced coaches find it better to give the group a chance to bring it back of their own accord. If the discussion gets too far off and there does not appear to be any chance

of the group bringing it back, the coach should be ready to step in and exercise control. He can remind the group of the objective of the session, and pose pertinent questions as a means of suggesting that inappropriate ideas be deferred until later. If the conversation is entirely irrelevant, the coach may decide to point out this fact, and suggest that the matter be dropped. The coach may sense that the group has some "hidden agenda" of its own which is getting in the way of the main discussion; if so, he will need to explore this with a series of questions such as "Why are we avoiding the subject of discussion? Is there something which is hanging us up?"

Controlling Side Discussion or "Sub-Grouping"

During a discussion, two or more participants may engage in private discussions on their own. Occasional exchanges of views between two group members seated side by side are permissible, but if these exchanges continue, causing distraction for the whole group, the coach must be prepared to deal with the problem. Here are three suggestions:

1. The instructor can pose a direct question to the persons involved, asking if the point they are discussing would be of value to the whole group.

2. He can restate the last opinion expressed and then pose a direct question to one of those involved in the aside, asking for his comments.

3. He can introduce a deliberate period of silence until those involved in the side conversation realize that they are holding up further progress for the whole group.

Handling Answers

Much has been said about the handling of questions. What does the coach do when he receives responses to his questions? Here are some suggestions:

1. Discourage group answers (except, perhaps, when someone is testing for consensus). If more than one participant is speaking at one time, it leads to confusion and loss of interest on the part of the other group members.

2. The temptation to enlarge upon a group member's answer should be avoided. After all, it is their answer and not yours. Post another question if necessary.

3. Do not permit a few to answer all the questions. If you find it necessary to direct a question to an individual,you may call the person by name and then state the question. Such direct questions should be employed sparingly. (A good alternative is to say you are going to ask a question about which you want everyone to think and then you will call on someone for an answer.)

4. If the student fails to answer, don't put down or humiliate him in any way. If he answers incorrectly, acknowledge his contribution and tactfully suggest that the idea he has expressed may be relevant under other circumstances, and then pass on to someone else.

5. Encourage complete and clearly expressed answers. If need be, ask a number of students to contribute to the final acceptable answer.

6. Give credit for a good answer, especially from weak or shy students.

7. Sometimes have another student give his views or state whether the answer was right or wrong.

8. Always confirm the correct answer to a factual question.

9. Do not repeat the students answer to your question. This encourages inattention. Repeating answers has the undesirable effect of lessening the value of importance of the students contribution. Further, this procedure trains the students not to listen to each other - only to you. If repetition is desired for emphasis, have one of the students do it.

10. Do not answer your own questions. Students very quickly realize that by out-waiting you they will have the responsibility of giving an answer removed.

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* Recommended for supplementary reading.

C. THE CASE METHOD

The case method is a group training process in which the group considers a situation such as occurs in life; it studies, analyzes and discusses the circumstances involved; it identifies the problems; it proposes possible solutions; and, with guidance, it organizes and evaluates the solutions proposed.

A case or case study is a piece of troublesome reality brought into the classroom, where it can be considered calmly and efficiently, without the actual risks and pressures which accompany such problems in real life.

The aims of the case method involve both process and content. It is expected that the group members will apply their intelligence to a problem in the comparative calmness of the classroom. They will study, analyze and discuss the problem with their peers. They will propose and evaluate solutions under the guidance of a more experienced person. When and if they meet a similar problem in real life, they will be able to: a. recall some of the possible solutions discussed in class; b. recall where they might go for expert advice, information, or other help, if needed; c. meet the problem more calmly because of having considered it before. It is also hoped that some of the attitudes and insights they acquire during case discussions may remain with them and influence their daily decisions.

Process. It is expected that, as a result of having been guided through the various formal steps in problem solving, having had considerable practice in applying them, and having engaged in much group discussion, the transfer of these skills will occur. In the future, group members will be able and likely to a. solve problems in their lives more efficiently; b. work with others, participate in community affairs, etc.; and c. talk and listen to others in such a way that real communication occurs.

Case Format

What constitutes a good case? Both good form and relevance to

objectives need to be considered, as well as suitability for the students who will use it. Suitability here refers to topic, length, mode of presentation, reading level, etc. As to good form, one tries to select a case which is as short as possible, but contains as much detail as the group needs in order to discuss it. The case should be kept simple enough that the discussion can be focused on a few major points; and it should not have an obvious, simple solution. It should make the situation and people seem real, thus motivating each member to become concerned and put himself in the position of the person in the case with the problem. This "identification" with the problem situation should generate a sense of pressure which demands that a solution be found as quickly as possible.

There are various forms the case may take, and these may affect the ways in which it is presented.

1. The issue is a common form which describes what has happened up to a crucial point, then lets the group propose ways of coping with the situation.

2. The descriptive case describes a situation or problem and the way in which it was handled. The group criticizes. This usually does not produce so much involvement as does the "issues case". However, it can be timely and exciting if it is actually a clipping from a current newspaper or magazine about some occurrence everyone is discussing.

3. The problem case describes a case and lets the group decide whether there is a problem, what it is and how it might be solved.

4. The progressive case is in two or more parts, each of which describes the situation up to a certain crucial point, then provides for discussion and suggestions as to what might or should happen next. One part takes over from the other.

Why Use Case Studies?

Life Skills students will find the case method one effective way

of developing and improving their social skills. The case method combines well with other methods, furnishing a vehicle for discussion, for problem solving, for the exposure (and perhaps the changing) of attitudes. It affords motivation for acquiring knowledge, and an opportunity to apply it.

Strengths of the Case Method

Some advantages of the case method over, for instance, the lecture method, for a Life Skills Course are that it stimulates active response and contribution on the part of the students, and thus, heightens interest. It de-emphasizes the "authority" and "fountain-of-knowledge" functions of the coach, and takes an open, questioning approach to subjects about which the students need to form some opinion for their personal guidance. It permits a true exchange of ideas, and often leads to continuing thought on the topics discussed. The case method provides practice in devising and evaluating solutions, in oral communication, in logical development of thought and in listening. Finally, it permits students to bring their life experience to bear on the subject, but lets them express it in relation to the person in the case study, without revealing details of their own lives.

The case method is suitable when:

1. the purpose is to affect the student's attitudes, sentiments, moral judgements, personal preferences, etc.

2. the purpose is to give training and practice in efficient problem solving.

3. there is no obvious right answer to a problem.

4. having knowledge or skill will not be helpful to students unless they put it to use, or act in a way that the knowledge or skill implies.

5. students intend to apply their knowledge but may have difficulty in doing so.

6. students lack motivation for acquiring certain knowledge or skills on which some part of their success in life actually depends.

In summary, whenever a process of problem solving may serve as a vehicle for improving the way in which students perceive and respond to their environment, the case method may be useful.

Limitations of the Case Method

The case method is not free from difficulties. Sometimes it is hard to get the students to take over the discussion; they may rely on the coach too heavily, they may not have sufficient information, or the subject may prove to be irrelevent to them. The case method may not be appropriate for the subject, or the case may not be well-constructed as a learning device. One of the greatest difficulties is knowing when to use it.

The case method would not be suitable where:

1. the subject matter is a definite set of facts to be learned.

2. time is limited and information is needed as quickly as possible.

3. students will inevitably be applying what they learn, without complications.

4. students will have to meet a formal standard of having achieved a specific skill or knowledge.

5. concepts, communication skills or language skills are not sufficiently developed to support a discussion.

Leadership Role

The case discussion leader presents the case to the group as simply and directly as possible. After getting the case discussion started, usually with a question or two, he withdraws from the discussion, leaving the group to discuss the case among themselves. He does not withdraw completely of course; he listens to what members have to say, comments briefly if asked directly, and enters the discussion only to keep it relevant and useful. At the end, the leader takes control again, helping the group to integrate, organize and summarize the points brought out. One of the leader's most important tasks at this point is to encourage a discussion among the students relating the points they have discussed to their own daily lives.

The leader does get the group to carry on the discussion by themselves.

does enter the discussion to keep it relevant and useful, to curb the talkative and encourage the silent. (We call this gate-keeping.)

does listen to what the group members say.

does help the group, at the end, to summarize their discussion -- to integrate and organize the points brought out. (Often this involves listing possible solutions in the order of their probable effectiveness and practicality.)

The leader does not put forward his own ideas at the beginning.

does not refuse entirely to give his thoughts when asked for them.

does not play the role of an all-knowing giver of information.

does not contradict a statement he disagrees with, but instead asks a question that causes the speaker to reconsider his position on the matter.

The leader performs these functions:

1. **Presenting** the case to the group

2. Getting the discussion started

3. Withdrawing from the discussion himself

4. Gate-keeping -- a facilitative function

5. Giving information or opinion when it is requested or needed

6. Helping the group to organize and integrate (summarize) points raised.

Each of these functions is described separately:

1. Presenting the Case to the Group

The case should be presented to the group as simply and directly as possible. You don't say, "This is a case about...," because the students are supposed to decide what it is about. The best way is simply to ask them to read, or listen, etc.

There are many forms of presentation. For instance you might:

a. Have students read the case before the session, as "homework". (Some of them will fail to do so.)

b. Have them read it silently in class. (Some will not have finished while others are waiting for the discussion to start.)

c. Have one of the students read it aloud while the others read or just listen. (This helps the slow readers to keep up with the group.)

d. Read it aloud yourself, and pause from time to time to ask questions designed to check the group's comprehension. (This takes more time, and may detract from the actual discussion by the premature raising of issues; however with proper control this may be very helpful, especially with a group whose reading comprehension is poor.)

e. Play back a tape on which the case has been recorded. (Especially useful where the case is in the form of a dialogue - different voices for the different speakers in the case. But remember that it is difficult to find a spot on the tape you may want to refer back to in order to settle a question of fact during the group discussion.)

f. Use a tape as above, plus the printed case. (This lets each participant choose whether he shall listen, read, or do both; it keeps the slow readers from falling behind; it permits easy reference later to check facts in the printed case.)

g. Present through videotape. (Equipment is not so generally available; preparation of the tape requires adequate acting, directing, cutting, etc.; but it does provide visual impact and visual clues, where one or both of these may be important.)

h. Stage an occurrence in the classroom, using participants who have been briefed privately in advance, and perhaps also including some "outsiders" or yourself. (If you have a participant act in an objectionable way to provide a case for discussion, that person may suffer from the criticism that emerges during the discussion. Moreover, if it is true that "we learn by doing", he may even be inclined to repeat such undesirable behaviour in other circumstances. However, this method may occasionally be useful to provide variety, when no one is likely to suffer from it. For example, two participants could be briefed to stage a skit where a serious mistake is obviously about to be made because of an error in communication and/or interpretation. This would hardly be a full-fledged case, but might provide a good discussion to start a session or series on communication.)

i. Some motion pictures or novels can be used as cases. A film may be shown completely and then discussed, or it may be stopped at strategic places for brief discussions. There are often "discussion guides" available with films to assist you.

2. Getting the Discussion Started

a. Ask a question or two - this will usually get the discussion focused in a useful direction.

b. The question(s) may be printed (and/or taped, etc.) at the end of the case. (Printed questions may tend to indicate or limit the focus of the discussion, but the coach can choose to supply further or different questions.)

c. The questions may be provided in a "manual" or "guide" that accompanies the case for use of the leader.

d. It may be necessary or preferable for the leader to construct his own questions; if so, it is desirable that these be thought out in advance.

e. If the case is complicated, it may be wise to begin with a few questions designed to bring out the facts in the case, and then go on to questions of "why", "how", etc.

f. When a group becomes accustomed to the case method, a participant may volunteer some comment as soon as the case presentation is completed. Wait to see if the others pick it up. If they don't you may seize upon this as a beginning, asking the others what they think on that point, etc. You may find that many of the questions you prepared will be brought up by the participants, but you will want to keep your list available for use if necessary.

3. Withdrawing From the Discussion

a. You don't really withdraw completely, but you try to get the group to start discussing the case with each other,not directing all their comments to you.

b. This may be difficult if the group is new to case method

or if they have just come to you from a previous class which was highly "teacher-centred." If you ask questions at this point, these may only serve to put you more "at the centre". You might try some of these tactics:

i. Try to withdraw by not looking at the speaker; this may discourage him from talking to you.

ii. Watch for a sign of possible disagreement, then help it to come to the surface; the excitement will probably start a direct exchange among the participants.

iii. Be patient; be quiet; be friendly but unresponsive, and hope they will forget about you.

iv. If all else fails, you might excuse yourself from the room for a minute or two and ask the group to go ahead with their discussion - and hope that their attention will not refocus on you when you return.

c. We don't suggest asking the group to forget about you, for this would place you in the position of discussing "roles" (yours and theirs) when you want them to focus on the case; it would also make them self-conscious. If they persist in offering tentative comments or implied questions to you, this means they are unsure of themselves, and they might become dismayed or even suspicious if you were to tell them, in effect, "You do the talking and I'll listen."

d. With experience, you will develop your own favourite ways of turning the case discussion over to the students. Remember, it will probably never be harder than the first time when you, as a new coach, try to turn the discussion over to a group of students who have not yet experienced the case method. You will all be inexperienced together!

4. Gate-keeping - A Facilitative Function

This is the process by which participants are helped to advance the discussion, meet the objectives of the session, develop and use

their own skill and knowledge, and give a similar opportunity to the others.

Sometimes the objectives of the session are known only to the leader. For instance if the aim is to reduce prejudice, an announcement of this would probably ruin the effect of the session. When case method is used as a means of attitude change, the objectives are usually not advertised to the group. Besides, a statement of objectives would "give away" the case, in which they are supposed to identify the problem(s).

a. Gate-keeping involves keeping the discussion to the point, and useful in relation to the objectives. For instance:

   i. If there are four main points to be emphasized, don't let the discussion get bogged down on the first one and miss the others. A question is usually a good bridge to the next point.

   ii. If the discussion gets off the subject, bring it back to the point where it departed: "Getting back to the question of..., what would you say was the reason for ...?" (Not all digressions are a waste of time; a digression may indicate an extremely strong interest or need. On rare occasions you may want to abandon your plan, but usually you will prefer to continue toward your objective(s) and then plan a session to deal with this special need or interest. If this topic is already scheduled for a later session, you might say so, for this will help to relieve the tension and let the group return to the main topic.)

   iii. When a participant says something which is relevant to your objective(s), seize upon it, and emphasize its importance by getting that participant and others to enlarge upon it.

   iv. Use a flip chart or chalkboard to jot down main points as the discussion progresses; questions on which the participants are to obtain further information; the summary at the end of the session; possible solutions to the case problem, etc.

b. Gate-keeping also means protecting the feelings of any who appear hurt or sensitive about some turn the discussion has taken. (For example, a participant who has recently become a mother-in-law may be sensitive about a stereotype mother-in-law in a case. Some gesture on the part of the leader to put this in perspective, point out the stereotype etc., or get the group to do so, would be useful.)

c. It involves keeping disagreements from becoming bitter or disruptive - while still encouraging the group to express a variety of views. A few stock phrases can help:

i. "Of course, we're all entitled to our own opinion, aren't we? What do the rest of you think about the point Mary and Fred were discussing?"

ii. "Let's agree to disagree on that point. Now what other possibilities would you suggest as reasons why...?"

Gradually, you should train your group to do its own gate-keeping to a large extent. When Frank says, "Just a minute, Tom, George has been wanting to say something!" you can allow your facial expression to reveal that you approve of Frank's gate-keeping. If this does not begin to occur automatically, you might suggest that they help each other in this way.

5. Giving Information or Opinion When This is Requested or Needed

During the first few minutes of a case study discussion, when you are trying to withdraw and get the group to take over, you might turn a question back with, "What do you think about that?" But you don't continue doing this indefinitely. You have expected the students to expose their thoughts, and sometimes their inadequacies; later, you must be willing to expose your thoughts too. If you don't, they will resent it. Besides, your contributions can be helpful to them. If you suddenly find you have exposed one of your own inadequacies (we all have them!), admit it frankly and chalk it up as a learning experience for you.

You might keep these points in mind:

a. When asked for your opinion, be wary of invitations to solve the case for the group! When you get one of these, you might look innocent, answer as "satisfyingly" as you can, and toss the ball back as quickly as possible, probably with a question.

b. When asked for a fact or some information, give it if this can be done briefly; or if you don't know, you might tell someone where to find it and have him report back while the discussion continues. If there is a large body of fact involved, and if it is important that it be learned, you might supply enough to support the discussion, and assign a project concerning the rest.

c. When the discussion is proceeding on the basis of wrong information, question the wrong information immediately; if no one else can correct it, do so yourself. (We are referring here to definite facts; not debatable points.)

d. You will seldom volunteer an opinion, except in the final "summary" stage of the discussion. Usually you will get participants to modify their opinions (if desirable) by asking questions that make them reconsider.

6. Helping the Group to Summarize the Discussion

a. At this point, you again become the obvious leader, very much in charge of the situation, as you were when the session started.

b. You get the group to contribute to the summary, but you judge the value, appropriateness, order, emphasis, etc. (or at least evaluate their judgement on these things) and see that a truly useful summary results.

c. In this phase you may fill in any gaps left during the discussion, and reinforce again some good points which came out. You may call attention to the process - the group's problem-solving technique, their good efforts at gate-keeping, etc. Some well-earned praise and approval are in order here.

d. Guide them toward expressing the summary in general terms, with references to each case in brackets if such references will serve to explain or emphasize. When this is not possible, the summary may be expressed entirely in terms of the case.

e. This stage may involve looking over a number of proposed solutions to the problem(s) in the case, summarizing what might be the outcome of each, and selecting what appears to be the solution which will most nearly approximate the desired result and entail the least risk; or, ranking a list of possible solutions in order of merit.

f. Record the summary points on a flip chart or chalkboard, and give participants a chance to copy them, if they wish to do so.

g. Encourage discussion of these points in relation to daily life.

h. The summary, being the last step, tends to be crowded into a few minutes; try to leave enough time for this important part of the case method.

Role-Playing in Case Study

In a case discussion, participants analyze realistic problem situations and frequently develop ideas for handling these problems. Role-playing can be used to try out ideas and courses of action developed in the case study. Spontaneous enactments are often appropriate and informative when they are based on the reactions of the participants in the case study. You will find guidance in the use of role-play in case study in the section of this handbook which deals with role-playing.

Bibliography

BERTCHER, H., et al; Role Modeling Role Playing: A Manual for Vocational Development and Employment Agencies; Manpower Science Services Inc.

*WAITE, N.; Case Studies and the Case Method; Prince Albert, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan NewStart, Inc., 1970.

* Recommended for supplementary reading.

D. Discussion Leading

Group discussion is a part of every lesson in the Life Skills course, and the skills of initiating and leading discussions are essential to the functioning of a Life Skills coach. Group discussion serves as the means by which you fulfill your responsibility to inform the students. In the Life Skills program, this is accomplished by asking questions and encouraging students to ask questions, so that, through exploration, they come to be informed. Your factual input is limited at first, but increases as the discussion develops.

Discussion-leading involves facilitating the free exchange of ideas and feelings, informing and questioning. In every aspect of your training to this point, you have been acquiring discussion leading skills. A total restatement of the discussion leading skills would be redundant. However, we ask that in reviewing the training sections listed below, you identify materials which pertain to effective discussion leading.

Unit IIIC	Towards Effective Communication
Unit IIID	Helpful and Harmful Group Behaviours
Unit V	Structured Human Relations Training
Unit VIB	Contingency Management
Unit VIIB	Questioning Techniques
Unit VIIC	The Case Method

We have written previously of "successive approximation", a technique involving the reduction of a complex task into its component parts. Your training to date has ensured your competence in the performance of the component skills of discussion leading. It now remains for you to put them all together in the discussion-leading sessions among your peers and with Life Skills students during the practicum phase.

UNIT VIII

THE COACHING PRACTICUM

The practicum phase provides opportunities to plan, prepare and present Life Skills lessons to your coaching peers and Life Skills groups. During this phase, you receive evaluative and remedial feedback from the trainer, your peers, the Life Skills coach and the Life Skills students. This feedback is illustrated and substantiated by videotape recordings of your performance.

Responsibilities

The trainer. The trainer oversees the scheduling, planning and preparation of the group for the practicum. He functions in a consultative capacity, advising you as necessary concerning problems you may have in planning and preparing lessons. The trainer observes at least portions of as many practicum lessons as possible; he must participate in all feedback sessions, watch the video playbacks, give feedback and evaluate performances.

The acting coach. As acting coach for a particular lesson, you are responsible for every detail of planning, preparation and presentation. This includes the physical set-up of the room, the availability and working condition of any required equipment, and the availability of any necessary materials. You must contact and solicit the co-operation of resource personnel, and you are responsible for consulting and seeking guidance from Life Skills coaches and the trainer during the planning and preparation stages.

The observers. The observer group is responsible for ensuring the availability and working condition of video-tape equipment for the observation room, and the availability, proper labelling and safe keeping of the videotapes. The group must ensure the presence of at least three observers for each practicum lesson. Those observing the lessons are responsible for taking detailed feedback notes, annotating these with VTR footage readings, and participating in feedback sessions.

Beyond the commitments outlined on the previous page, each of you will be held responsible for the efficient and productive use of your training time. For some this may involve supplementary reading; for others, additional skills practice or job search activities. The training centre and the community are a resource rich environment, and you are expected to make purposeful use of both.

UNIT IX

EVALUATING STUDENT PROGRESS

Introduction

Just as the goal in disciplining is self-discipline, so the goal for sound evaluation should be realistic self-evaluation. If students are to evaluate themselves realistically, they must have practice; they must also understand the criteria on which the evaluation is based and must believe in the appropriateness of the criteria. If they have helped to determine the criteria, they are more likely to understand and accept them. And when students evaluate experiences they have had, you must take care to permit honest evaluation.

Since your major job is to help students learn, evaluation should be given with this in mind. If the task is to help students, then evaluation must be helpful - it must lead to further learning and skills development.

Questions Regarding Student Progress

What skills does the student practise during the Life Skills course? Does he perform the skills expected of him as stated in the lesson objectives? How committed is the student to use a new skill? What evidence does the student give that he has or will adopt the new skill? What skills does the student lack? What behaviours can you use to help the student acquire or improve his skills? Can the student describe the skills he practised in a lesson? Can he describe the process he used, or how he used it? Does he adjust his behaviours to meet his goals? Does he transfer evaluative skills to situations outside the Life Skills course? How quickly should you pace his instruction? When should he recycle skill practice? How do you assess the readiness of students to handle problems with a high emotional content? Does the student view his progress realistically? Do you view the student's progress accurately? Should a supervisor intervene? Should you request special counselling for the student?

To monitor student development and to improve skill performance, you should ask questions like the foregoing, and use formal and informal measures to gather data for decisions which promote student growth. Throughout the course you ask, "On the basis of observed behaviour, what can I do to cause improved skill performance in each student? How can I facilitate maximum co-operation among the students to help them accept and give help to one another?"

While you have an interest in judging final product skills, that is, in knowing whether or not a student can perform a given skill, your greater interest is in measuring the process the student uses to acquire new skills. This gives information to help you promote even greater proficiency in the skills the student has when he comes to the Life Skills course.

The measures used in the course provide ample opportunity for evaluation; an array of techniques exist for the supervisor, coach or student to use. Rather than relying exclusively on outside measures or judgements made by others, the course reinforces ways to help the student to use self-evaluation techniques and to make better use of, and in fact, request assessments as a means of changing his behaviours, even after he leaves the course.

Evaluation Methods

The types of evaluation measures used in the Life Skills course are given in Table 1, listed in approximate order of the frequency of their use. Table 2 describes these measures by the type of information generated by the data, the decisions that might result from analysis, and the users of the various types of information. Study these tables carefully before reading the remainder of this section; refer to the tables when reading the text to provide yourself with an overview of the evaluation methods available. (All the tables and figures are at the end of this unit.)

There are four main evaluation elements used in Life Skills training: the skill objective which describes what the student will do as a result of training; the measure which you and the student will use to describe the student's achievement of the objective; points of especial meaning on

the measure; and the instructional decision which you make on the basis of the student's achievement. Your initial concern involves the student's use of the skill, rather than how well he uses it. Admittedly, it is hard to separate the two; however, some students accomplish a great deal just to use the skill,let alone perform it well. You therefore seek performance first, then proficiency.

Evaluation, as used in the Life Skills course, involves two concepts. The first is that evaluation provides information for making instructional decisions, based on the degree to which the student achieves the objectives, for helping the student to become more skillful. That is, you first determine the ability periphery of the student, and then help him to overcome any skill failure by devising a learning situation within his ability peripnery. (See "Behavioural Skill and Role Training Approach to Life Skills" by P.W. Warren, in Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving, Saskatchewan NewStart Inc., 5th edition.) The evaluation methods listed below, numbers 1. a. and 1. b. are most useful in this area, both in determining skill achievement and in motivating you to initiate appropriate training techniques. Methods 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10 are also useful.

The second concept of evaluation as used in the Life Skills course emphasizes product assessment as well as progress development, and measures the general progress of individuals and the group, general problem areas in course content and procedures, the impact of Life Skills training on the student's life, etc. The evaluation methods numbered 5, 6, 7, 11 and 12 are useful in this area, most especially for individuals not directly involved in coaching or learning - supervisors, officials, evaluators/researchers, etc.

Continuous Evaluation Methods

1. a. Opportunity Response Scale

The Opportunity Response Scale (ORS) measures student performance using four criterion points: No Response, Constrained Response, Voluntary Response and Teaching Response. The No Response criterion needs little explanation: regardless of what you may do, the student does not use the new behaviour. At the level of Constrained Response,

the student practises the new skill at some sort of urging. You might ask or coax him to use it; you might remind him that he promised to use it; you might even threaten him in some way, or the group might put pressure on him to perform the skill. If the student responds under constraint, you then have an assessment of his adoption of the new behaviour. At the level of Voluntary Response, the student uses the new skill when the opportunity arises. You can feel most certain that the student has adopted a new skill when he shows the Teaching Response. If he wants to show the new skill to someone else, then he must know it well and feel secure with it.

Each succeeding level of response requires a greater commitment from the student than the preceding one. You strive to bring the student to the level of voluntary response, realizing, however, that he may not move to this level as soon as he first practises the skill.

In order to keep tally on the skill development of the students, you prepare a Skill Development Record Book. (Figure 1) On the basis of a survey of the Life Skills lessons, organize the skill record book as indicated in Figure 1, using a separate record for each student. The record is entered in sequence of the skills taught; the column at the left then shows the lesson sequence for the structured recycling of skills. The lesson sequence also provides a structured setting in which students have added opportunity to use and teach the skills.

1. b. Overcoming Skill Failure.

A simple evaluation of the student's progress contributes little to his skill development. Using the form in Figure 2 as a sort of self-discipline helps you to promote each student's development. The form is used in a post-lesson analysis in which you identify a skill failure from the objectives of the lesson or a failure to use a skill taught previously, and record it in terms of accurate specific behaviours. "Did not use eye contact" not "Does not seem to pay attention." In a like manner, you describe your own planned Coach's Remedying Behaviour. "Will model eye contact for him" rather than "Try to get him to look around." The commitment to action implied by entering your own behaviour on the report form provides you with a means of completing the evaluation cycle. By accumulating the daily forms during the course, you can study each student's growth in response to your

own efforts, and can check the thoroughness with which you carry out your own plans.

2. Continuous Informal Evaluation.

Close attention to students' remarks about the course during the sessions and in off-hours can indicate problems that students have in practising the skills required of them. You can use this information, plus feedback about your behaviour, to plan your program. The coach training course trains you to value and use this type of information rather than to consider it as criticism.

Evaluation is a constant activity in Life Skills training, and the coach training skills of video feedback, responsible feedback, perception-checking, behaviour description, skill training and micro-training model, and behaviour modification all use evaluative behaviours on the part of you and the students.

Every Lesson Evaluation Methods

3. Lesson Objectives.

You can identify the skills to be taught by referring to the lesson objective. The objective usually contains several processes, all of which must be carried out or the student is not considered to have achieved the lesson objective. For example, suppose the lesson objective is: The student uses the 5WH system and the "why" question to name a personal goal. The student must use the 5WH system as one process, the "why" question as another process, and he must name a personal goal as another, in order to reach the lesson objective. Usually you seek to have the students use each of the skills during the lesson; however, students do not always respond right away, especially at the voluntary level, and they cannot always teach the skill the very day they first practise it. Furthermore, the design of some lessons requires a period of time to pass before the student can apply some of the skills. Carefully kept records give you a clear picture of student growth and provide a useful basis for counselling students on their progress.

4. Evaluation Section of Each Lesson.

Time is provided in each lesson to sum up what was accomplished, how it was accomplished, and how it could have been better accomplished. Also, you and the group together can assess whether or not the objectives were attained. These activities provide information on which to base your decision to repeat (in whole or in part) the lesson, or to recycle the skills practice; it also allows students to give feedback regarding the lesson, the course and yourself.

The evaluation sections of the lessons contain specific and general suggestions regarding evaluation, and provide the means for you to judge each student's performance level on the ORS scale which you then enter in the Skill Development Record Book.

Periodic Evaluation Methods

5. Group Development in Interpersonal Relations Skills.

This short form (Figure 3a.) could be used each time the students have an opportunity to use interactional skills, that is, when they are together as a group. It should certainly be used at least once a week. When using the form, it is important that you understand thoroughly what is involved in each of the five areas rated, the directions, and the descriptions of the scales (Figure 3b.). As indicated in the directions, you are to grasp the total atmosphere of the group as best you can, and make evaluations on the basis of your judgments. The scale attempts to capture, on a rating form, your "gut reaction" to how the group functions at the time the ratings are done. The summary form (Figure 3c.) can be used to plot the general progress of the group; again this is of more use to other interested parties such as supervisors, researchers, etc.

6. Progress Report Forms.

On a regular basis, once every one or two weeks, each student rates

himself, you, the training materials and his peers on a number of aspects (Figure 4a.). As well, you rate each of the students on several personal characteristics (Figure 4b.). The ratings made by you and the students are entered on a summary sheet (Figure 4c.), where trends over time, and any serious discrepancies between the ratings made by you and the students can be seen. These, as well as any comments made on the report forms, may indicate problem areas, which you then discuss with the student concerned. A plan for remedying the problem is developed, written up, and included with the rating form and summary sheet.

7. Coach Ratings of Students.

This rating form (Figure 5a.) presents a list of thirty-one behaviours considered important signs of individual student progress. You should complete this form once every one or two weeks and use it in a manner similar to the Progress Report Summary (Figure 5b.). Since the items involve more specific behaviours than those included on the Progress Report, you can use the data to make more specific instructional plans for each student. However, the evaluation is still at a rather general level; it is most useful in providing a general picture of student progress over time.

Formal Lesson Evaluation Methods

8. Review Lessons.

The lessons entitled: "Defining the Problem", "Explaining Life Skills to Others", "Setting Goals", "Demonstrating Life Skills", and "Applying for a Job" emphasize the information gained by the students about themselves during the course. In working through these review lessons, the students review the material and critically examine their skills, thus providing a basis for them to use in setting goals for the next phase of the course. You must be thoroughly familiar with these lessons, as they provide you with an assessment of each student's accomplishments, and his needed and desired goals. You use these lessons to help them formulate plans of action to achieve their goals. (These lessons, and following lessons mentioned, are all in the Life Skills Coaching Manual, Saskatchewan NewStart Inc., 1972.)

9. Evaluation Lessons.

The lessons: "Giving and Receiving Feedback", "Rating Behaviours in Groups", "Learning Helpful Behaviours in Groups", "Evaluating Membership on a Team", "Evaluating Problem-Solving Skills", and "Evaluating Employability" make use of self, peer and group evaluation techniques to assess interpersonal relations skills and general problem-solving skills as they apply to life problem situations, specifically to the world of work. Again, you must be thoroughly familiar with these lessons and their proper use.

10. The Lesson: "Writing Tests".

The lesson "Writing Tests" provides students with an opportunity to practise the rituals of test writing, and then to take certain tests which give information on personality, attitudes, interests and knowledge. A trained and qualified individual explains the meaning of the test results and their implications for students' personal and vocational goals; he identifies areas of strength and weakness and points out any need for counselling.

Initial/Terminal/Follow-up Evaluation Methods

11. Test of Problem-Solving Skills.

Development has begun on an individually-administered test to assess the student's problem-solving skills. It is, however, at an early stage in development, and has not yet been tried.

12. Exit and/or Follow-up Interview.

The exit or follow-up interview format (Figure 6a.), with its form for evaluation (Figure 6b.), can be used to evaluate the impact of Life Skills training on the life of the student. The information you are seeking deals with what skills the student gained in Life Skills training, what he can do now that he couldn't do before, where and

when he has used the skills, comments of others on changes in skills, etc. Thus it is important to probe for specific examples of any mentioned benefits or harms resulting from the training. Vague generalities such as "I liked it", "It was terrible", "I got some good out of Life Skills", must not be accepted.

You must be very familiar with the form for evaluating the interview (Figure 6b.) as basic background information for conducting the interview, in order that you can probe for the information you need to make the ratings. A transcribed audiotape of the interview gives you a permanent record - useful for further analysis by yourself and others, as a source of case studies and testimonials, and as evidence of course impact on the student.

Bibliography

*MARTIN, M.J. and Himsl, R.; "Evaluating Student Progress in a Life Skills Course", in Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving; 5th ed., Saskatchewan NewStart Inc., 1972.

*SHEPPARD, W.C., Shank, S.B. and Wilson, D.; How to be a Good Teacher: Training Social Behavior in Young Children; Research Press, 1972.

*WARREN, P.W. and Lamrock, L.A.; "Evaluation of the Life Skills Course", in Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving: 5th ed., Saskatchewan NewStart Inc., 1972.

* Recommended for supplementary reading.

Table 1: Methods for evaluating student progress

Continuous (Daily) Evaluation

1. Formal

   a. *Opportunity Response Scale (ORS), Figure 1
   b. *Overcoming Skill Failure (OSF), Figure 2

2. *Informal: Feedback within the group; spontaneous remarks outside of the group or course made by students and others; reports by students and others about what students did.

Every Lesson Evaluation

3. *Lesson Objectives

4. *Evaluation Section of Each Lesson

Periodic Evaluation

5. Group Development in Interpersonal Relations Skills, Figures 3a, 3b, & 3c.

6. Progress Report Forms filled out by students and coaches, Figures 4a, 4b, & 4c.

7. Coach Ratings of Student, Figures 5a, & 5b.

Formal Lessons

8. *Review Lessons: "Defining the Problem", "Explaining Life Skills to Others", "Setting Goals", "Demonstrating Life Skills", "Applying for a Job".

9. *Evaluation Lessons: "Giving and Receiving Feedback", "Rating Behaviours in Groups", "Learning Helpful Behaviours in Groups", "Evaluating Membership on a Team", "Evaluating Problem-Solving Skills", "Evaluating Employability".

10. *The lesson "Writing Tests".

Initial/Terminal/Follow-Up Evaluation

11. Test of problem-solving skills.

12. Exit and/or Follow-Up Interview, Figures 6a, & 6b.

* Evaluation methods which are most useful in coaching Life Skills.

Evaluation Measures	Brief Description of Measure	Type of Information Generated	General Type of Questions Answered	General Type of Decisions	Uses of the Information
Continuous (Daily) Formal Evaluation					
1a. Opportunity Response Scale (ORS) (Fig. 1)	A form which lists the skills taught and the dates on which the student responds at various levels of achievement.	Levels of skill achievement & commitment to use or adopt the skill.	What evidence does the student give that he has or will adopt the new skill? Do the students refuse to use the skill even with urging? (No response). Does the student respond only under constraint? (Constrained response). Does the student use the skill when the opportunity arises? (Voluntary response) Does the student teach the skill to others? (Teaching response).	Provide more opportunity. Provide more feedback.	Coach Student Supervisor
1b. Overcoming Skill Failure (OSF) (Fig. 2.)	A form which lists the skill failures for individual students from lesson objectives or earlier lessons and then lists a Coach's remedying behaviour to help the student overcome the skill failure identified.	Problems student has practising new skills. Coach behaviours to help the student.	During the lesson, did the student achieve the special objectives the course set? Did the coach's remedying benaviour help the student succeed? What skills does the student lack? What coach behaviours help the student improve his skill?	Determine special objectives for individual students. Seek outside help. Change own behaviour.	Student Coach Supervisor Counsellor

Table 2: Evaluation procedures in the Life Skills course.
(Table 2 is continued on the next 5 pages.)

Evaluation Measures	Brief Description of Measure	Type of Information Generated	General Type of Questions Answered	General Type of Decisions	Uses of the Information
Continuous (Daily) Informal Evaluation					
2. Feedback Skills, Paraphrasing, Questioning Skills	Coach notes and seeks clarity on comments made by the student about the course, himself, fellow students to make necessary adjustments.	Problems, successes, transfer attempts, coach behaviours which help/hinder.	Practially any question could be answered and, although it is not systematic evaluation, it might be more valuable since it is spontaneous and largely unguarded.	Any type, depending on the questions and comments made.	Student Coach
Every Lesson Evaluation					
3. Lesson Objectives	Statements written in process product terms identifying skills emphasized in each lesson.	Expectation of student behaviour. Purpose of lesson.	What skills will the student be expected to practise during this lesson/course? Does the student use the skills in the lesson objectives? Should skill practice be recycled? Should the student begin the next phase of lessons? Was the purpose achieved?	Repeat lesson. Recycle skill practice. Move on to next phase. Devise new exercises to emphasize similar skills.	Student Coach Supervisor

Table 2 (continued)

Evaluation Measures	Brief Description of Measure	Type of Information Generated	General Type of Questions Answered	General Type of Decisions	Uses of the Information
4. Evaluation Sections of Individual Lessons	A time set aside after each lesson to sum up what was done, how it was done, and how it could better be done. The lesson structures activities to provide the coach with a variety of ways to conduct these sessions.	Review of what was done, how it was done and how it could be improved. Assessment of whether or not lesson objectives were reached.	Does the student know what he did, how he did it? Does he know how to judge his performance? Does he know how to adjust his goals? Does he know how to adjust plans? How realistic is he about his achievements and his goals? Should the skill practice of the lessons be recycled? How ready are the students to handle more skills? More complex content? More affective content? How ready are the students to move on through the course?	Repeat lesson. Recycle skills practice. Move on to next lesson or phase. Provide feedback to students. Allow students to give feedback about lessons or coach. Identify new lessons needed (content-wise).	Coach Students
Periodic Evaluation					
5. Group Development in Interpersonal Relations Skills (Fig. 3)	A short form for the coach to rate the total group in five areas of group functioning.	Coach's impressions of how group works as a group. Changes over time in this area.	How is the group developing as a helping/learning group? Do they show any improvement over time in working together?	Determine need for group maintenance procedures. Does coach need more training in developing a group?	Coach Supervisor Researcher/ Evaluator

Table 2 (continued)

Evaluation Measures	Brief Description of Measure	Type of Information Generated	General Type of Questions Answered	General Type of Decisions	Uses of the Information
6. Progress Reports (Fig. 4)	Form for obtaining subjective evaluation by coach and student attitudes toward the course, materials, coach and peers, and self characteristics. Ratings of coach and students compared for agreement and trends (Better, no change, worse).	Perception of progress by student and coach. Assumed significant when perceptions differ strongly. Plot of rated progress over time.	How does the student view the course, the materials, his progress, his peers and the coach? How does the student's perception of his progress differ from the perception of his progress made by his coach? Does the student view his progress realistically? Does the coach view the student's progress accurately? Does the supervisor need to intervene? Is the need for professional counselling a possibility?	Determine need for intervention in a developing problem area. Determine need for counselling and special help.	Student Coach Supervisor Researcher/ Evaluator
7. Coach Ratings of Student (Fig. 5)	Form for coach to rate each student on 31 behaviours considered signs of progress.	Coach's judgment of student performance on these behaviours.	What are the weak and strong behaviours of the student? Are they changing or improving over time? How does he compare with others?	Determine need for improvement in skills.	Coach Supervisor Researcher/ Evaluator

Table 2 (continued)

Evaluation Measures	Brief Description of Measure	Type of Information Generated	General Type of Questions Answered	General Type of Decisions	Uses of the Information
Formal Lessons					
8. Review Lessons	These lessons emphasize information gained about self learned in the course. The student reviews the material and then uses it to plan his next activities. This provides a setting where the student must take a close look at his skills - a most intense type of evaluation.	A periodic assessment. Setting goals for next parts of course.	The student asks: How am I doing? What skills have I gained? Where do I go from here? What resources can help me? The coach asks: Should skill practice be recycled? Is the student ready to move to the next phase of the course? How well can the student handle his life problems? How motivated is the student? What does he want from the course?	Recycle skill practice. Move on to next phase of course. Provide individual counselling. Refer student for counselling. Provide feedback. Plan tours or invite guests to widen horizons.	Student Coach Supervisor
9. Evaluation Lessons	Lessons making use of self, peer and group evaluation techniques to assess problem-solving skills applicable to life problem situations and specifically in relation to the world of work.	Assessment of problem-solving and work skills. Plans for ways to use them and to improve them.	What skills has the student gained in the course? How do the skills fit in with the work skills he has? How can he make use of what he can do?	Vocational choices. Ways to maintain and improve skill development.	Student Coach Supervisor
10. The lesson: Writing Tests	The students practise the Test Orientation Procedure and write certain tests chosen by the Life Skills staff.	Scores depending upon the tests chosen by the coach and his supervisor.	How do I compare with other people on these measures? What does that mean for my personal goals?	Change personal goals. Seek advice from counsellors. Expand range of vocational options.	Student Counsellor

Table 2 (continued)

Evaluation Measures	Brief Description of Measure	Type of Information Generated	General Type of Questions Answered	General Type of Decisions	Uses of the Information
Initial/Terminal/Follow-Up Evaluation					
11. Test of Problem-Solving Skills (in process)	An individual test to measure students' problem-solving skills and approaches.	Provide an assessment of the problem-solving skills to measure pre and post training. Provide indication of skills to emphasize most.	What problem-solving skills does student have? How does he approach problems? What skills does he need to practise or learn?	Decide whether or not the persons should take the course or what aspects of the course. Decide on how students may help each other by teaching their skills and learning from others.	Recruitment Student Coach Supervisor Researcher/ Evaluator
12. Exit and/ or Follow-Up Interview (Fig. 6)	An interview format with an accompanying evaluation method which provides questions to cover the various skills and life areas dealt with in the Life Skills Course. Used as an exit and/or follow-up interview.	Influence and use made of Life Skills in life of student. Assess the overall and specific impact of Life Skills on the life of the student.	What use has student made of the things learned in Life Skills? How much transfer is there between the course and life? Is the student better off for having taken Life Skills?	Decide whether or not to continue funding the Life Skills course. Decide on how to strengthen the transfer of skills.	Student Coach Supervisor Agency/ Sponsor Researcher/ Evaluator

Table 2 (continued)

Student's Record of Skills Achievement on the Opportunity Response Scale (ORS)

Student's Name John Horner Date Started Training: January 17, 1972

Lesson Nos.	Skill Taught	Date and Level of Achievement			
		No Response	Constrained Response	Voluntary Response	Teaching Response
1	Identifying Interests		Jan. 21		
3, 4, 7, 27, 56	Receives V.T.R. Feedback		Jan. 27	Jan. 28 Feb. 10	
31, 50	Set Criteria	Mar. 1	Mar. 6		Apr. 27

Figure 1: Sample Format for the Skill Development Record Book.

Life Skills Evaluation Form: Overcoming Skill Failure (OSF)

Lesson Explaining Life Skills to Others Date March 2, 1972 Coach Turner

Student's Name	Skills Failure	Coach's Remedying Behavior	Result
Sam	Didn't use eye contact	Model eye contact	Can't do it with girls. Might need Egan walking and skill training
Judy	Considered only 1 idea.	Ask her to record ideas from brainstorming on flip-chart.	She did it - learned to get the idea of brainstorming - keep on watching for her to present ideas in future

Figure 2: Sample format for "Overcoming Skill Failure"

Figure 3a: GROUP DEVELOPMENT IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS SKILLS

Coach:_____ Group:_____ Rater:_____

Lesson:_____ Date of Evaluation_____ Rating Number:____

Based on the descriptions of the scales which are involved in defining interpersonal relations skills, rate the group as a whole on their position on each scale. Put an "X" in the appropriate box for each scale to indicate the extent to which the behaviours described are characteristic of the group as a whole.

	Excellent			Good			Fair			Poor			Comments
	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
1. Exchanging meaningful feedback concerning each other's behaviour.													
2. Congruence, genuineness, experimenting, risk-taking and self-disclosure.													
3. Supportiveness; awareness of and responsiveness to feelings; accurate empathy.													
4. Group involvement, initiative and cohesion.													
5. Role behaviour flexibility.													

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Figure 3b
Description of Scales
Group Development in Interpersonal Relations Skills

Certain impressions usually result from observing or participating in a group session. When you observe a group, you observe the members behaving in certain ways and other members responding to the members' behaviours in certain ways (i.e., personal and interpersonal behaviours). From your observations of members acting and interacting, you are to form a global, overall impression of the group in terms of the scales described here. Your rating will be a form of summary impression of the total group "feeling" or "atmosphere". This rating is a substitute for the more elaborate procedure of rating each individual member on these scales and then obtaining the average rating for the group. Thus, you are asked to make estimates of the group average to come up with this "group feeling" or "group atmosphere", rather than using a statistical method.

Read the descriptions of each scale very carefully, then proceed with the ratings.

1. Exchanging meaningful feedback concerning each other's behaviour: the extent to which group members are willing and able to give and receive meaningful and helpful information regarding their feelings and honest reactions to each other's behaviour without becoming defensive or hostile. Do they exchange feedback information with each other, offered and accepted in a concerned and helpful manner; or is it either not exchanged or done in an unhelpful (e.g., hositle or superficial) way? Is the feedback: specific versus general; behaviour focused versus motive or intention focused; focused on changeable things versus focused on unchangeable things (things that the person cannot do much about); focused on the here and now versus the there and then (past and/or outside situations); clear versus vague; tentative versus absolute; descriptive versus evaluative; informative versus ordering?

2. Congruence, genuineness, experimenting, risk-taking and self-disclosure: the extent to which group members are willing and able to give and share at a significant and important level, their feelings, beliefs, attitudes, opinions and ideas;

the extent to which their sharing constitutes some risk to their self-esteem and security in the group; the extent to which they are being themselves and being congruent in words, actions and expressions. Do they share personally meaningful and important things which could be used against them or do they share superficial safe things? Is the exchange: congruent, where words, behaviour and expressions communicate the same message versus incongruent, where what they say, do and look like tell different things; risky, where they freely experiment with different behaviours versus safe, where they only do what they are used to; open and honest versus phoney, playing roles and games to hide their true selves; revealing, where they disclose threatening things which could damage their self-esteem, influence or power versus unrevealing, where they disclose only safe and unimportant things or things that have been resolved long ago and are no longer threatening.

3. Supportiveness; awareness of and responsiveness to feelings; accurate empathy: the extent to which the group members support, encourage and reinforce each other in their attempts to be open, to risk, to give and receive feedback; the degree of sensitivity (awareness and responsiveness) of group members to each other's feelings and their ability to communicate this sensitivity and understanding to each other. Are they supportive, sensitive, accurate, and responsive in understanding how each other feels, or are they unsupportive, unaware of and unresponsive to each other's feelings; cool, bored, uninterested and maybe busy giving advice inappropriate to the mood and content of each other's statements and communications (verbal and non-verbal). Are the group members: supportive and encouraging versus non-supportive, unencouraging, and embarrassed; sensitive, aware and responsive versus insensitive, unaware and unresponsive; able to let each other know they are "with" each other versus unable to let each other know they are "with" each other; accurate in assessing how each other feels versus inaccurate in assessing how each other feels; able to respond to all levels of communication (verbal and non-verbal) versus unable to respond to all levels and respond only to the superficial level of communication, e.g., the verbal content.

4. Group involvement, initiative and cohesion: the extent to which all members of the group are involved in what is going on, and the extent to which initiative is spread among the

group members. Are all members contributing ideas, facts, opinions, feelings; are they all gate-keeping, clarifying, summarizing, encouraging, initiating, etc. or is just the coach or maybe one or two doing this?

5. Role behaviour flexibility: the extent to which the various necessary behaviours for effective group functioning (helping behaviours) are spread among all group members versus the situation where each person is a "specialist" in a very limited number of behaviours. Do all members perform the necessary behaviours to help the group function adequately at the time, or do they tend to settle into specialized roles and functions even when this is harmful to the group functioning?

Figure 3c: SUMMARY OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS SKILLS

Student _____ Coach(es) _____ Date Start Trng. _____

Item Number	Rating Number (enter the number of each on top of column)														
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															

Figure 4a: STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT: LIFE SKILLS COURSE

STUDENT_____ COACH(ES)_____ RATING NUMBER_____ DATE_____

We need to know: How well you are doing on your course.
The benefits you gained.
Your problems which have not been helped by the course.
How well the coach is doing in running the course.
The usefulness of the training materials (such things as reading materials, V.T.R., things the coach uses to help you learn).

To help us get this information, please fill out this report as honestly as you can. Put an "X" in the square that best shows your opinion about the topic rated. The coach is doing a similar report. The training supervisor will discuss with you and your coach any cases where your two ratings differ greatly.

		Excellent			Good			Fair			Poor		
	TOPICS RATED	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
////	TRAINING MATERIALS	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////
1	How helpful are the training materials for training?												
2	How interesting and relevant are the training materials?												
////	YOUR COACH	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////
3	How well does your coach understand your problems?												
4	How well does your coach attend to your needs?												
5	How well does your coach help you learn?												
6	How well does your coach run the class?												
////	YOURSELF	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////
7	How is your interest in the course?												
8	How hard do you work in the course?												
9	How useful are the things you are learning?												

		Excellent			Good			Fair			Poor		
		12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
10	How well do you use class time?												
11	How well do you finish hard course work?												
12	How well do you help others?												
13	How well do you show consideration for others?												
////	OTHERS IN YOUR GROUP	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////	////
14	How well does your group help you to learn?												
15	How much consideration do they show each other?												
16	How much interest do they show in the course?												

COMMENTS ON ANY OF THE ABOVE RATINGS (INCLUDING THE FIRST PAGE)

COMMENTS ON OTHER ITEMS SUCH AS: MY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES; THINGS IN WHICH I NEED MORE HELP; GOOD AND BAD HABITS OF COACH; USE OF VTR, CLASSROOMS & FACILITIES; OTHER STAFF; VISITORS

PASS THE COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR TRAINING SUPERVISOR

Figure 4b: COACH PROGRESS REPORT: LIFE SKILLS COURSE

STUDENT _____ COACH _____ RATING NO. _____ DATE _____

	TOPICS RATED	EXCELLENT			GOOD			FAIR			POOR		
	Rate the student on:	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1	Interest in the course												
2	How hard he works and really tries												
3	Use of class time												
4	Completion of difficult work												
5	Helpfulness to others												
6	Consideration for others												
7	Course progress												

COMMENTS ON ANY OF THE ABOVE RATINGS

COMMENTS ON OTHER ITEMS SUCH AS: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES; USE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL; MARKED BEHAVIOUR CHANGES; ATTENDANCE; PROBLEMS.

PASS THE COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR TRAINING SUPERVISOR

Figure 4c: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS REPORTS: LIFE SKILLS COURSE

STUDENT _____ COACH(ES) _____ DATE START TRNG. _____

Item No.

CO	ST	TOPICS RATED	RATING BY	Rating Number (enter number of each on top of column)									
1		INTEREST	COACH										
	7		STUDENT										
2		APPLICATION	COACH										
	8		STUDENT										
3		USE OF TIME	COACH										
	10		STUDENT										
4		PERSEVERANCE	COACH										
	11		STUDENT										
5		HELPFULNESS	COACH										
	12		STUDENT										
6		CONSIDERATION	COACH										
	13		STUDENT										
7		PROGRESS	COACH										
	9	USEFULNESS OF THINGS LEARNED	STUDENT										
		STUDENT RATING OF TRAINING MATERIALS											
1		LEARNING EASE											
2		SUITABILITY & INTEREST											
		STUDENT RATING OF COACH											
3		UNDERSTANDS HIS PROBLEMS											
4		ATTENDS TO HIS NEEDS											
5		HELPS HIM TO LEARN											
6		RUNS THE CLASS											
		STUDENT RATING OF PEERS											
14		HELPFULNESS											
15		CONSIDERATION											
16		INTEREST											

RATINGS

Excellent	10 - 12
Good	7 - 9
Fair	4 - 6
Poor	1 - 3

Figure 5a: COACH RATINGS OF STUDENT

Student:_____ Coach:_____ Rating No._____ Date:_____

Please rate the student on these behaviours by putting a check in the appropriate square.

	HOW WELL DOES THE STUDENT:	Excellent			Good			Fair			Poor		
		12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1.	Volunteer to speak out in the group.												
2.	Speak out in the group when asked.												
3.	Listen and attend to others in the group.												
4.	Appear to understand what is being said in discussions.												
5.	Provide substance in what he says (does he make sense as opposed to just "talking.")												
6.	Ask for opinions and expressions of ideas from the other group members.												
7.	Ask for authoritative information and facts related to area being discussed.												
8.	Make sure of what others are suggesting/saying by asking questions, restating what he thinks is meant, etc												
9.	Express his feelings in or to the group.												
10.	Share responsibility for group leadership.												
11.	Help the group establish goals.												
12.	Help the group accomplish goal.												
13.	Help the group evaluate goal accomplishment.												
14.	Show flexibility in accepting goal changes.												
15.	Keep persevering when the group seems unmotivated.												
16.	Help to motivate the group												
17.	Accept responsibilities arranged by the group.												

	HOW WELL DOES THE STUDENT:	Excellent			Good			Fair			Poor		
		12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
18.	Carry out responsibilities arranged by the group												
19.	Co-operate with other members of the group.												
20.	Recognize when a fellow student needs help.												
21.	Support fellow students who need help.												
22.	Show skill in helping others for whom he is concerned.												
23.	Display a positive attitude in training sessions.												
24.	Accept constructive criticism from the group.												
	DO OTHERS/GROUP:												
25.	Pay attention to what he has to say.												
26.	Seek suggestions/information from him.												
27.	Seek opinions/feelings from him.												
28.	Show that they accept him as a group member.												
29.	Support him when he needs help.												
30.	Accept advice and help from him.												
31.	Assign responsibilities to him.												

Figure 5a (continued)

Figure 5b: SUMMARY OF COACH RATING OF STUDENT

Student_____ Coach(es)_____ Date Start Training_____

Item No.	Rating Number (enter the number of each on top of column)																	
1																		
2																		
3																		
4																		
5																		
6																		
7																		
8																		
9																		
10																		
11																		
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23																		
24																		
25																		
26																		
27																		
28																		
29																		
30																		
31																		

Ratings

Excellent	10 - 12
Good	7 - 9
Fair	4 - 6
Poor	1 - 3

Figure 6a
Interview Guide and Instructions

(Capital letters indicate questions to ask the student)

1. Introduction of interviewer to student (if interviewer is not known), or explanation of the purpose of the interview.

   "HELLO (Student's name), I'M (your name). I'D LIKE TO: GET YOUR OPINIONS OF THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE YOU TOOK; FIND OUT WHAT YOU THINK ARE THE GOOD AND BAD THINGS IN THE COURSE; WHAT USE YOU HAVE MADE OF THE SKILLS YOU LEARNED; WHAT THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW THAT YOU COULDN'T DO BEFORE THE COURSE AND SO ON." "IS IT OK TO USE THIS TAPE RECORDER?" (Get agreement from student.)

   If student balks, explain: "IT HELPS ME IF I HAVE A RECORDING LATER TO LISTEN TO. IF I CAN'T TAPE IT I'LL HAVE TO TAKE NOTES BECAUSE I CAN'T REMEMBER ALL THE THINGS YOU TELL ME." If student still doesn't agree to taping say: "OK THEN, I'LL TAKE SOME NOTES SO I WON'T FORGET WHAT YOU SAID."

2. If this is a follow-up interview say: "WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING SINCE YOU TOOK LIFE SKILLS?" Probe for changes in activities especially in the area of training and jobs.

3. Ask all students: "HAS THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE? WHAT THINGS DO YOU DO NOW THAT YOU DIDN'T DO BEFORE? WHAT THINGS DO YOU USE FROM THE COURSE IN YOUR DAILY LIFE?" Get specific examples whenever possible.

4. Some general probes and points to remember:

   a. To see if you understand what the student is saying, paraphrase thus: "IT SEEMS TO ME THAT YOU ARE SAYING..." or "AM I RIGHT WHEN I SAY THAT...?"

   b. To get some evidence of behavioural change from others ask the student: "YOU SAY YOU HAVE CHANGED AND YOU USED TO _____ BUT NOW YOU _____. HAS ANYONE EVERY MENTIONED THIS TO YOU? HOW DO OTHERS KNOW YOU HAVE CHANGED?"

   c. To get specific examples and instances of all statements of generalities ask: "GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE OF THAT PLEASE." or

"TELL ME MORE ABOUT THAT. JUST HOW DID YOU DO THAT IN THAT SITUATION?" or "DESCRIBE HOW YOU DID THAT BEFORE THE COURSE AND HOW YOU DO IT NOW."

d. To find out if there has been a change due to Life Skills training ask: "HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE YOU TOOK LIFE SKILLS? WHAT DO YOU DO NOW THAT YOU WOULDN'T DO BEFORE?"

e. If the student has been positive in most responses, then make sure he will defend that judgement by challenging him. "FROM WHAT YOU HAVE SAID I DON'T REALLY THINK LIFE SKILLS HAS HELPED YOU VERY MUCH. IT SEEMS THAT YOU COULD HAVE DONE IT ALL ALONG ON YOUR OWN?"

f. To get at the use of problem-solving and human relations skills as they are used in the student's life, probe thus: "DO YOU USE (problem-solving or human relations skill) TO HELP YOU IN THIS PROBLEM?" Skills to probe for include: "5WH SYSTEM (WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, HOW); LISTENING SKILLS (ATTENDING BEHAVIOURS OF ATTENTIVE BODY POSTURE, EYE CONTACT, VERBAL FOLLOWING); RANKING OF CHOICES; BEHAVIOUR DESCRIPTION; ASK FOR AND GIVE INFORMATION, IDEAS AND OPINIONS; CHECK FOR MEANING BY PARAPHRASING; EXPRESS AND DESCRIBE FEELINGS; IDENTIFY ASSUMPTIONS; USE THE EXPRESSION 'IN WHAT WAYS MIGHT...?" BRAINSTORM; LIST ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS; SELECT CRITERIA; EVALUATE SOLUTIONS; DO A FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS; SET GOALS; PREDICT RESULTS; DEVELOP AND USE A CHECK LIST; INTERVIEW; VOTE; WRITE LETTERS; MAKE A BUDGET; USE THE FIGHTING FAIRLY SKILLS.

g. To get at the general question of what they use of the Life Skills course in their lives ask: "WHAT PARTS OF THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE DO YOU USE IN HELPING YOURSELF WITH LIFE PROBLEMS? WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST/LEAST USEFUL IN THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE?"

5. Probing in the five general areas of life.

a. Job, work, training.

(1) "HAVE YOU LOOKED FOR A JOB OR TRAINING?" If yes go on, if no, go to next area.

(2) "HAS LIFE SKILLS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN YOUR ABILITY TO LOCATE JOBS OR TRAINING? HOW?"

(3) "HAS IT MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN YOUR GETTING A JOB OR HOLDING A JOB? DO YOU KNOW HOW TO FILL OUT FORMS, INTERVIEW FOR JOBS AND WRITE RESUMES BETTER NOW OR NOT? HAVE YOU GOTTEN BETTER RESPONSES FROM EMPLOYERS? DO THEY SEEM MORE INTERESTED IN HIRING YOU?"

(4) "DID YOU GET A JOB OR GET FURTHER TRAINING?" If yes go on, if no, go to next area. "HOW DO YOU GET ALONG WITH YOUR BOSS, TEACHER, TRAINER, NOW AFTER LIFE SKILLS? BETTER, WORSE, ABOUT THE SAME? HOW ABOUT YOUR FELLOW WORKERS? CUSTOMERS? STUDENTS? ETC.?"

(5) "DO YOU HAVE MORE RESPONSIBILITIES AT WORK, SCHOOL, ETC. THAN BEFORE LIFE SKILLS? DO YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH BEING LATE OR ABSENT? DID LIFE SKILLS HELP YOU WITH THESE?"

b. Community, Agencies and Community Officials

(1) "HAVE YOU USED THE RESOURCES AND ADVANTAGES OF YOUR COMMUNITY DIFFERENTLY NOW AFTER TAKING LIFE SKILLS? DO YOU USE THE LIBRARY? READ THE PAPER? USE THE SPORTS AND OTHER RECREATION PLACES? BANKS AND CREDIT UNIONS? SHOPS AND STORES?"

(2) "HAVE YOU USED THE GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY DIFFERENTLY NOW AFTER TAKING LIFE SKILLS? CANADA MANPOWER? WELFARE? HEALTH CLINICS, PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES, DOCTORS, HOSPITALS? CHURCHES? SCHOOLS? UNIONS? SERVICE CLUBS (LIONS, ROTARY, ELKS, KINSMEN, ETC.)? INDIAN AFFAIRS? INDIAN FEDERATION? FRIENDSHIP CENTRE?"

(3) "HAS LIFE SKILLS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN DEALING WITH POLICE, COURTS, JUDGES, LAWYERS? DO YOU FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE WITH THESE PEOPLE? ARE YOU ABLE TO GET BETTER TREATMENT FROM THEM NOW THAN BEFORE?"

(4) "DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN YOUR COMMUNITY MORE NOW THAN BEFORE? DO YOU VOTE? LEARN ABOUT THE CITY, BAND, LOCAL GOVERNMENT? HELP YOUR COMMUNITY SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS BY WORKING ON COMMITTEES, ETC.? TALK ABOUT ISSUES WITH YOUR FRIENDS? LET OFFICIALS KNOW WHAT YOU THINK? ORGANIZE PEOPLE TO HELP THEMSELVES?"

c. Leisure Time

(1) "HAS LIFE SKILLS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN THE WAY YOU USE YOUR FREE TIME? HAVE YOU STARTED ANY NEW HOBBIES OR ACTIVITIES? CAN YOU THINK UP NEW AND INTERESTING THINGS TO DO WHEN YOU HAVE FREE TIME OR DO YOU DO PRETTY MUCH WHAT YOU USED TO DO BEFORE LIFE SKILLS? DO YOU GET INTO TROUBLE WITH YOUR FREE TIME ACTIVITIES (e.g., drinking, hanging around, joy-riding, etc.) DO YOU DO DIFFERENT THINGS NOW THAN BEFORE YOU TOOK LIFE SKILLS?"

d. Family and Home Life Situation

(1) If the student is married or common law or living with someone in a marital type relationship ask: "HAS LIFE SKILLS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU GET ALONG WITH YOUR WIFE/HUSBAND, ETC.? ARE YOU FIGHTING MORE OR LESS? IS THERE A CHANGE IN HOW YOU SETTLE YOUR DISAGREEMENTS NOW THAN BEFORE LIFE SKILLS? ARE YOUR FIGHTS MORE FAIR AND CLEAR THE AIR, GET THINGS OUT INTO THE OPEN? ARE YOU MORE SATISFIED WITH YOUR LIFE WITH YOUR PARTNER NOW THAN BEFORE LIFE SKILLS?"

(2) "DO YOU HAVE ANY CHILDREN?" If the student has children ask: "HAS LIFE SKILLS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU GET ALONG WITH YOUR KIDS? WHAT DIFFERENCES ARE THERE IN HOW YOU RAISE THEM? PUNISH THEM? REWARD THEM? DO YOU ARGUE MORE OR LESS WITH THEM? ARE YOU BETTER ABLE TO HELP YOUR KIDS WITH THEIR SCHOOLING NOW AFTER LIFE SKILLS? DO YOUR KIDS HAVE A BETTER OR WORSE TIME IN SCHOOL NOW AFTER YOU HAD LIFE SKILLS?"

(3) "DO YOU HAVE ANY PARENTS, IN-LAWS, BROTHERS, SISTERS, OR RELATIVES THAT YOU HAVE CONTACT WITH?" If yes, ask: "HAS LIFE SKILLS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU GET ALONG WITH ANY OF THESE PEOPLE? ARE YOU FIGHTING MORE OR LESS? IS THERE ANY CHANGE IN HOW YOU SETTLE YOUR DISAGREEMENTS NOW THAN BEFORE LIFE SKILLS?"

(4) "HAS LIFE SKILLS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU HANDLE PROBLEMS OF FOOD AND MEALS? CLOTHING? HOUSING? BUDGETING? TRANSPORATION?

e. Self and Interpersonal Relations

(1) "DO OR DID YOU HAVE PROBLEMS WITH DRINKING?" If yes, ask: "HAS LIFE SKILLS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU DEAL WITH THIS PROBELM? WASTING MONEY? FIGHTING IN PUBS? GETTING ARRESTED? ILLNESS? FAMILY FIGHTS?"

(2) "HAS THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU DEAL WITH YOUR PERSONAL PROBLEMS? DO YOU KNOW BETTER HOW TO AVOID MAKING PROBLEMS? DO YOU KNOW HOW AND WHERE TO GET HELP WITH PROBLEMS?" Problems include: "DRUGS, TEMPER AND FIGHTING, MOODS, ATTITUDES, HABITS, DRESS AND GROOMING, FEAR AND ANXIETY, SHYNESS, EMBARRASSMENT, ETC."

(3) "HAS THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU GET ALONG WITH OTHER PEOPLE IN GENERAL? MAKING FRIENDS? MEETING AND TALKING WITH PEOPLE, STRANGERS, STORE CLERKS, BANK AND CREDIT UNION PEOPLE, ANYONE WHOM YOU HAD PROBLEMS IN TALKING TO BEFORE LIFE SKILLS? HAS THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU GET ALONG IN GROUPS OF PEOPLE? SPEAKING OUT AND CONTRIBUTING, VOICING AN OPINION, GOING TO MEETINGS, MAKING A MOTION AT MEETINGS, TAKING LEADERSHIP, ETC.?"

(4) "HAS THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU FEEL AND THINK ABOUT YOURSELF? DO YOU FEEL BETTER ABOUT YOURSELF, YOUR BELIEFS, YOUR PEOPLE, YOUR LIFE? HAS IT MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS? DO THINGS FOR YOURSELF? MORE INDEPENDENT OR MORE DEPENDENT?"

6. Total Life

Make sure that you get this evaluation from the student: "THINK BACK OVER YOUR LIFE AND COMPARE IT BEFORE AND AFTER LIFE SKILLS. TELL ME YES OR NO TO THESE QUESTIONS: "DID LIFE SKILLS DO YOU LASTING HARM?" (if no, go on). "DID LIFE SKILLS DO YOU SOME HARM BUT IT DIDN'T LAST?" (if no, go on). "WAS LIFE SKILLS A WASTE OF TIME?" (if no, go on). "WOULD YOU SAY LIFE SKILLS DIDN'T MAKE MUCH DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE; NEITHER GOOD NOR BAD?" (if no, go on). "WAS LIFE SKILLS OK AT THE TIME BUT DIDN'T DO MUCH GOOD?" (if no, go on). "DID LIFE SKILLS HELP YOU SOME WITH YOUR LIFE PROBLEMS?" (go on). "DID LIFE SKILLS HELP YOU IN A VERY IMPORTANT AND LASTING WAY?"

7. Close Out

"THANKS A LOT FOR YOUR TIME AND TELLING US WHAT YOU THINK OF LIFE SKILLS. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO SAY?" Listen to anything they have to add and probe if appropriate. Then say good-bye.

Figure 6b
Instructions for Evaluating Interviews

On the basis of the interview give your evaluation of the influence of Life Skills on the student on the accompanying rating scale.

It is absolutely necessary that this rating be a true reflection of your judgement if you want the truth about the influence of Life Skills whether good, bad, or indifferent. DO NOT give Life Skills the benefit of the doubt. If you cannot choose between two ratings, use the lower of the two.

Here are the rating numbers you will use, and their definitions; please take plenty of time to familiarize yourself with them before proceeding to the rating scale. Feel free to go back to these definitions to refresh your memory.

-3 = Life Skills was mostly harmful and bad; the student was damaged by Life Skills and has not recovered from these bad effects (the harmful effects are still with him at the time of the interview) e.g., the Life Skills group may have confronted him on a problem of drinking which upset him so much that he is now drinking more than he was before the course; or a confrontation occurred during the course between a man and wife so that they are now separated; or as a result of the programs and a confrontation with members of another race the student is now more resentful of that race than before.

-2 = Life Skills was mostly harmful and bad; Life Skills created problems for the student which were not resolved at the time but do not particularly harm him at the time of the interview (the harmful effects were not long lasting) e.g., the Life Skills group was digging into his past and didn't have the means to help him with these past problems; the student became temporarily upset so that basic education suffered; or the student becomes so involved in the program that the spouse at home becomes jealous and the home life is made temporarily worse.

-1 = Life Skills was mostly a waste of time, effort and money; any harmful effects result mostly from this waste. While the student didn't mention any harmful effects of Life Skills (e.g., being upset or confused by them), it was mentioned or implied that there were other things he could have done which were more useful or profitable than Life Skills.

0 = Life Skills had no influence on the life of the student one way or the other (neither good nor bad) since he had nothing better to do with his time. He gained nothing by Life Skills; or the good and bad influences were equally balanced so that the net results were neutral; or changes which occurred in life had little or nothing to do with Life Skills (they would have occurred anyway or were as much the result of the other influences as they were of Life Skills).

+1 = Life Skills was slightly beneficial and the student gained something from it; he enjoyed or was interested in Life Skills but there was no long term benefit or effect. There are other ways to have an enjoyable time without undergoing training and so we can infer that Life Skills made no long term impact.

+2 = Life Skills was worth the time and effort involved and the student gained quite a bit in a general way; the benefits are still felt at the time of the interview but he cannot say in a specific sense what the benefits are or the benefits were in restricted areas of life (e.g., more variety in meals).

+3 = Life Skills made a significant, fundamental, basic and important improvement in the student's life which is still in effect at the time of the interview; a significant and far reaching improvement in one or more of the student's basic problems. As a result of the training he solved a major problem, or made a major revision of attitude, belief or behaviour which was a problem before the training, e.g., the student saw the foolishness of excessive drinking while in the program and has as a result not been drunk since; the student has changed his style of getting along with people and thus does not create problems by being suspicious or hostile with others; or the student has changed a significant direction in life to more stable employment, more stable family life, a marriage saved or repaired.

NA = not applicable to student. Do not use this rating except when you have no information at all on which to base a rating. Try to assign a number rating wherever possible.

In summary the rating scale numbers indicate:

-3 = mostly harmful, lasting effects.

- 2 = mostly harmful, not lasting effects.

-1 = mostly a waste of time.

0 = no influence.

+1 = slightly beneficial, enjoyable, no lasting effects.

+2 = generally quite beneficial or beneficial in a restricted area, lasting effects.

+3 = significant, fundamental, important long-term benefit.

NA = item does not apply.

RATING SCALE FOR EVALUATION OF INTERVIEWS

Interviewer: _____

Rater: _____

Student: _____ Date of Interview: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Circle the number which most adequately reflects your judgement of the impact of Life Skills on the life of the student.

Areas of Life to be rated

A. SELF AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

1.	Self-concept, felt self-worth, ability to make decisions and take action on own initiative, self-determinism.	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	
2.	Ability to form meaningful and rewarding relations with people in general, friends, relatives (not immediate family); ability to participate in groups and make contributions to groups.	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	
3.	Ability to handle personal problems (identify, resolve and prevent problems; obtain help with personal problems when necessary); e.g., drugs, temper and fighting, moods, attitudes, habits, dress and grooming, etc.	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	
4.	Ability to handle own alcohol problems (if student has the problem).	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	NA

B. FAMILY AND HOME LIFE SITUATION

5.	Ability to handle marital problems - problems with spouse (if student is married).	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	NA
6.	Ability to handle problems with own children - child rearing, discipline, affection, education (if student has children).	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	NA
7.	Ability to handle problems with own parents, in-laws, siblings and relatives.	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	NA
8.	Ability to handle problems of own total family life, e.g., feeding, clothing, housing, financing, etc.	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	

C. LEISURE TIME

9.	Ability to use leisure time purposefully, use free time for personal development, enjoyment and social benefit, develop existing or new interests; ability to enjoy self without getting into trouble.	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	

D. COMMUNITY, AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY OFFICIALS

10. Awareness of and ability to use community resources, e.g., educational, library, mass media, recreational, financial, retail, etc. -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

11. Ability to handle problems with agencies and institutions, e.g., Manpower, Indian Affairs, Welfare, health facilities, church, school, unions, service clubs, Indian Federation, Friendship Centre. -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

12. Ability to handle problems with police and/or courts. -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 NA

13. Ability to contribute to community, participate in community affairs, knowledge of and ability to fulfill community responsibilities. -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3

E. JOB, WORK AND TRAINING

14. Ability to locate jobs or training and information about jobs or training. -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 NA

15. Ability to get and/or hold a job. -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 NA

16. Ability to get along with boss, fellow workers, customers, etc. -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 NA

17. Ability to handle job responsibilities or obtain assistance in areas where the student is not able to do the job, e.g., how much responsibility, absenteeism, and lateness, etc. -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 NA

F. TOTAL LIFE

It is useful to have a total, global evaluation of the impact of Life Skills on the life of the student. This is a very important rating and so be sure that you are familiar with the meanings of the rating scale numbers before you do it. In your mind go back over the interview and form a global impression of how the program influenced the life of the student and then enter your judgement on the rating below.

18. Total evaluation of Life Skills. -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3